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*THE DISCIPLE AND OTHER POEMS*





# THE DISCIPLE

And other Poems

By GEORGE MAC DONALD

AUTHOR OF "WITHIN AND WITHOUT," "A HIDDEN LIFE," ETC.



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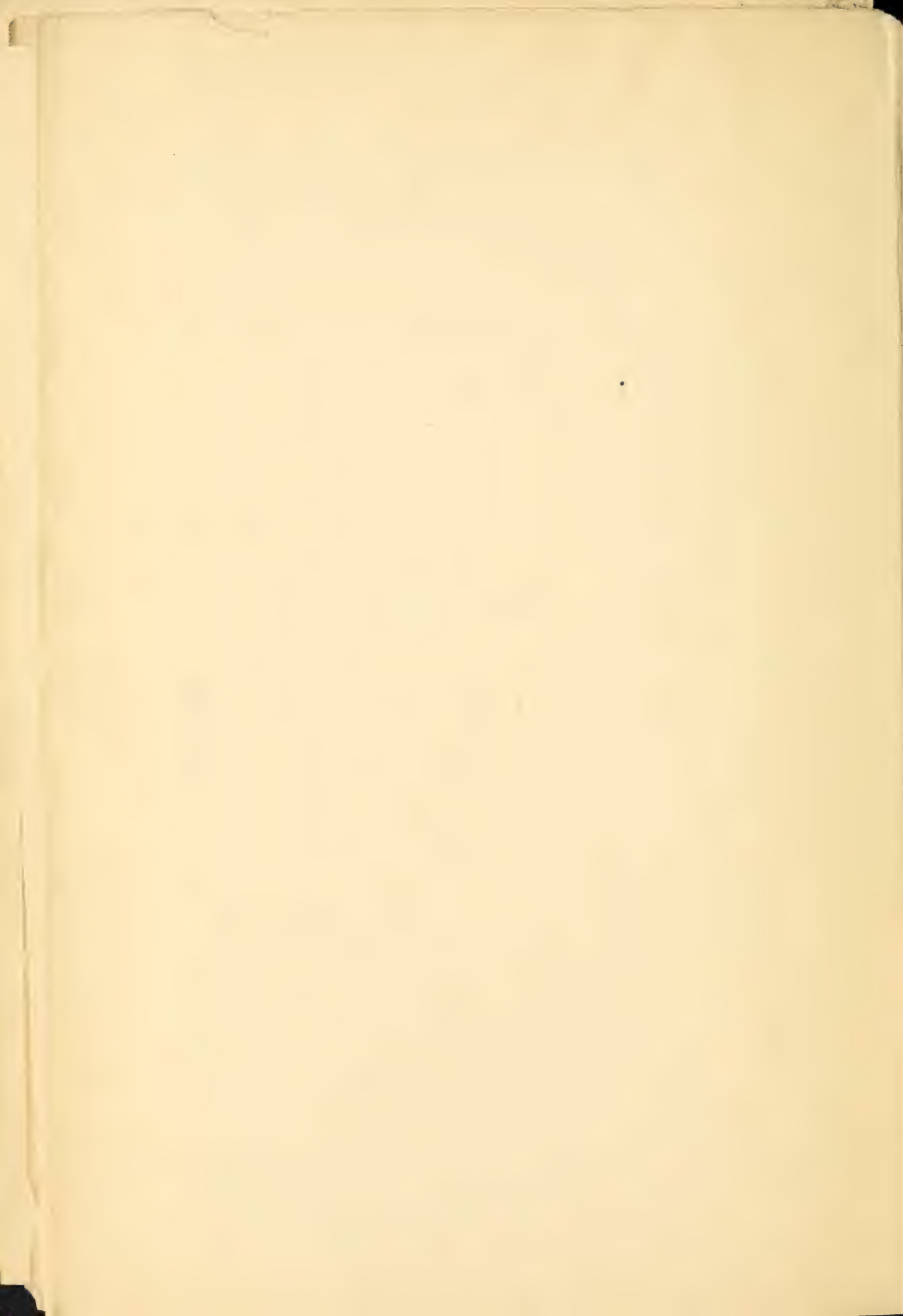
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THE DISCIPLE.





## THE DISCIPLE.

### I.

ALAS ! in ages far away,  
The good, the heavenly land,  
Though unbeheld, quite near them lay,  
And men could understand.

The dead yet find it, who, when here,  
Did love it more than this ;  
They enter in, are filled with cheer,  
And pain expires in bliss.

Oh ! fairly shines the blessed land !  
Ah God ! I weep and pray :  
The heart thou holdest in thy hand  
Loves more this sunny day.

I see the hundred thousand wait  
Around the radiant throne :  
Ah, what a dreary gilded state !  
What crowds of beings lone !

I do not care for singing psalms ;  
I tire of good men's talk ;  
To me there is no joy in palms,  
Or white-robed, solemn walk.

I love to hear the wild winds meet,  
The wild old winds at night ;  
To watch the star-light flash and beat,  
To wait the thunder-light.

I love all tales of valiant men,  
Of women good and fair :  
If I were rich and strong, ah ! then  
I would do something rare.

I see thy temple in the skies  
On pillars strong and white ;  
I cannot love it, though I rise  
And long with all my might.



Sometimes a joy lays hold on me,  
And I am speechless then ;  
Almost a martyr I could be,  
And join the holy men.

Straightway my heart is like a clod,  
My spirit wrapt in doubt :  
“ *A pillar in the house of God,  
And never more go out !*”

No more the sunny breezy morn ;  
No more the glowing noon ;  
No more the silent heath forlorn ;  
No more the waning moon !

Ah God ! my heart will never burn,  
Will never taste thy joy ;  
Even Jesus' face is calm and stern—  
I am a hapless boy.

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## I.

I read good books. My heart despairs.  
In vain I try to dress  
My soul in feelings like to theirs—  
These men of holiness.

Some times a gentle sympathy  
With long-departed saint,  
Dawns, feebly radiant, over me—  
Experience old and quaint,

As of a church's holy night,  
With low-browed chapels round :  
No common sunshine dares alight  
Upon the sacred ground.

One glance at sunny fields of grain,  
One shout of child at play—  
Discordant melodies again  
Drive all the good away.

My spirit will not enter here,  
Or fill this holy gloom ;

---

I look into a mirror mere,  
A mirror, not a room.

For as a bird against the pane,  
I strike, deceived sore ;  
I know no reason, yet remain  
Outside it as before.

My thoughts, like birds, abroad I fling  
Into a country fair :  
Wind-baffled to their nest they wing,  
And I am in despair.

Oh ! it will cost me many a sigh,  
If this be what it claims—  
This book, so unlike earth and sky,  
Unlike my hopes and aims.

To me it is a desert bare,  
O'er which a spirit broods  
Whose wisdom I would gladly share  
At cost of many goods.

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## III.

O hear me, God ! O give me joy,  
Such as thy chosen feel.  
Have pity on a hapless boy,  
Whose heart is hard as steel.

I do not love that which is good ;  
Even thee I do not love ;  
I do not like this bible-food ;  
My heaven is not above.

Thou wilt not hear. I come no more.  
It is no use, I see.  
My bosom aches with weeping sore.  
Thou carest not for me.

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## IV.

Once more I kneel. The earth is dark,  
And darker yet the air ;  
If light there be, 'tis but a spark  
Amid a world's despair—

A hopeless hope that there may be  
A God somewhere to hear :  
To him once more I bend the knee,  
The God with open ear.

He knows my tale. Ah ! men may say,  
And saying say the truth,  
“It is a tale of every day—  
The weakness of his youth” ;

But when his love is dead and gone,  
Silent is even the lark ;  
The sun goes down all nights, yet none  
Sees therefore in the dark.

The world hath melted from my sight ;  
In life no grace is left.

I cry to thee with all my might,  
Because I am bereft.

What matter that my sorrows rest  
On ills which men despise !  
More hopeless heaves my aching breast,  
Than when a prophet sighs.

There's love enough upon the earth,  
And beauty too, they say :  
There may be plenty, may be dearth,  
I care not any way.

In vain I cry. The earth is dark,  
And darker yet the air.  
Of light there is not one poor spark  
Amid my world-despair.

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## V.

I sit and gaze from window high  
Upon the noisy street.  
No part in this great coil have I,  
No fate to go and meet.

My books long days untouched have lain ;  
The lecture-hour is slow ;  
Far other thoughts go through my brain,  
Than those gowned bosoms know.

Knowledge, it may be, glads the mind—  
Grave men the lure repeat ;  
For me, I seek some rarer kind  
That makes the pulses beat.

Old books, new facts, they preach aloud—  
Their tones like wisdom fall :  
I see a face amid the crowd,  
Whose smile were worth them all.

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## VI.

But something is not right within.  
Are old hopes all gone by?  
Is it a bootless aim to win  
A vision of the sky?

They preach and preach that men should pray,  
Pray on until they find ;  
But God is very far away,  
Nor is his countenance kind.

Yet I remember one who prayed,  
Withdrawing every night :  
He had some answer, and it made  
Him able for the fight.

Once more I'll seek the God of men,  
Redeeming childhood's vow.—  
I failed with bitter weeping then,  
And fail cold-hearted now.

## VII.

Why seek for God? A man I tread  
This old life-bearing earth;  
In me rise thoughts and lift my head—  
My being gives them birth.

Men say—he must the good ensue,  
Because a Christian:  
I say—he must be noble, true,  
Because he is a man.

They say that he must wake and keep  
Lamp burning, garments white,  
Else he shall sit without and weep  
When Christ comes home at night:

I say, his manhood must be free;  
Himself he should not stain;  
He must not soil the dignity  
Of heart and blood and brain.

Yes, I say well! for words are cheap.  
What action have I borne?

What praise will my one talent reap ?  
What grapes are on my thorn ?

Have high words kept me pure enough ?  
In evil have I no part ?  
Hath not my bosom "perilous stuff,  
That weighs upon the heart" ?

I am not that which I can praise ;  
I do not that I say ;  
I sit a talker in the ways,  
A dreamer in the day.

VIII.

Some of their words are true, I know :  
A man may lose his life ;  
I grant that all men downward go  
Without the upward strife.

'Twere well my soul should cease to roam,  
Should seek and have and hold.  
It may be there is yet a home  
In that religion old.

---

Again I kneel, again I pray :

*Wilt thou be God to me ?*

*Wilt thou give ear to what I say,*

*And lift me up to thee ?*

Comes it at last ! A vision high !

The clouds of heaven dispart ;

An opening depth of loving sky

Looks down into my heart.

There is a home wherein to dwell—

The very heart of light !

Thyself my sun immutable,

My moon and stars all night !

I thank thee, Lord. It must be so,

Its beauty is so good.

Up in my heart thou mad'st it go,

And I have understood.

The clouds return. The common day

Falls on me like a *No* ;

But I have seen what might be—may ;

And with a hope I go.

## IX.

I am a stranger in the land,  
It gives no welcome dear ;  
The roses bloom not for my hand,  
The lilies for my cheer.

The sunshine used to make me glad,  
But now it knows me not ;  
This weight of brightness makes me sad—  
It isolates a blot.

I am forgotten by the hills,  
And by the river's play ;  
No look of recognition thrills  
The features of the day.

Then only am I moved to song,  
When down the darkening street,  
Before it vanishing the throng,  
The driving rain I meet.

The rain pours down. My thoughts awake,  
Like flowers that languished long.



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From bare cold hills the night-winds break,  
From me the unwonted song.

X.

I read the Bible with my eyes,  
But hardly with my brain ;  
Should this the meaning recognize,  
My heart yet reads in vain.

These words of promise and of woe  
To me are tinkling sound ;  
As through an ancient tomb I go,  
With dust-filled urns around.

Or as a sadly searching child,  
Afar from love and home,  
Sits in an ancient chamber piled  
With scroll and musty tome ;

So I, in these epistles old  
From men of heavenly care,  
Find all the thoughts of other mould  
Than I can love or share.

No sympathy with mine they show,  
Their world is not the same ;  
They move me not with joy or woe,  
They touch me not with blame.

I hear no word that calls my life,  
Or owns my struggling powers ;  
Those ancient ages had their strife,  
But not a strife like ours.

Oh ! not like men they move and speak,  
Those pictures in old panes,  
Unchanging in their aspect meek  
For all the winds and rains.

Their thoughts are filled with figures strange  
Of Jewish forms and rites :  
A world of air and sea I range,  
Of mornings and of nights.

## XI.

I turn me to the gospel-tale.  
My hope is faint with fear  
That neediest search will not avail  
To find a refuge here.

A misty wind blows bare and rude  
From the dead sea of the Past ;  
And through the clouds that halt and brood,  
Dim dawns a shape at last ;

A sad worn man who bows his face  
In might of gentleness,  
To suffer for an abject race,  
That else were shelterless.

Kind words he speaks ; but all the time  
As from a pathless height  
Where human feet can never climb,  
Half-swathed in ancient night.

Oftenest he seems a weary saint,  
Embalmed in pallid gleam,  
Listless and sad, without complaint,  
Like dead man in a dream.

Yet sometimes, to a gentle heart,  
His words unkindly flow ;  
Surely it is no Saviour's part  
To speak to women so.

Far rather would I refuge take  
With Mary, dear to me,  
To whom those rough hard words he spake,  
“*What have I to do with thee?*”\*

Surely I know men tenderer,  
Women of larger soul,  
Whom gentler, homelier feelings stir,  
Who always would make whole.

And at the best he is uplift  
A spectacle, a show :

\* The poems called *The Gospel Women*, printed in a preceding volume, were intended to form part of *The Disciple*.

To me, an old, an outworn gift,  
Whose worth I cannot know.

I have no love to pay my debt—  
He leads me from the sun.  
Yet it is hard men should forget  
The kindness he has done :

That he, to expiate a curse,  
Upon that altar-hill,  
Beneath a sunless universe,  
Should suffer, patient, still.

But what is he, whose pardon slow  
At so much blood is priced?—  
If such thou art, O Jove, I go  
To the Promethean Christ.

## XII.

My conscience says I am to blame ;  
I must go to the man,  
Confess the deed by its own name,  
And make what peace I can.

“ His triumph thus I cannot bear,  
For he did ill to me.”

“ But thy wrong is alone thy care,  
Not what he did to thee.”

“ To do it right, my heart should own  
Some sorrow for the ill.”

“ Plain, honest words will half atone,  
And they are in thy will.”

The struggle comes. Evil or I  
Will gain the victory now.  
I am unmoved, yet wish to try :  
O God, to thee I bow.

The skies are brass ; there falls no aid ;  
No wind of help doth blow.  
But I bethink me :—I am made  
A man : I rise and go.



## XIII.

To Christ I needs must come, they say,  
Who went to death for me :  
I turn aside ; I come, I pray,  
My unknown God, to thee.

He is afar ; the story old  
Is blotted, worn, and dim ;  
With thee, O God, I can be bold—  
I cannot speak to him.

“Pray” ? At the word a cloud of grief  
Doth fold me in its pall :  
How can I pray without belief  
In anything at all ?

I know not if a God be there  
To hear my crying sore,  
If in the great world anywhere  
An ear keeps open door.

'Twere vain an unborn faith to nurse ;  
To search, an endless task ;  
Therefore into the universe  
I call aloud and ask.

Is there no God—earth, sky, and sea  
Are but a chaos wild ;  
Is there a God—I know that he  
Must hear his calling child.

XIV.

I kneel. A fog-like misery dumb  
Rises and spreads in me,  
As for a friend that will not come,  
A face I cannot see.

It is not fear of broken laws,  
Or judge's damning word ;  
It is a lonely pain, because  
I call and am not heard.

A cry where there is none to hear,  
On hill or desert plain,  
Returns in silence on the ear,  
In torture on the brain.

No look of love a smile can bring,  
Or kiss bring back the breath  
To cold lips : I no answer wring  
From this great face of death.

XV.

Yet sometimes when the agony  
Dies of its own excess,  
A deep repose descends on me,  
A rain of gentleness ;

A sense of bounty and of grace,  
A calm within my breast,  
As if the shadow of a face  
Did fall on me and rest.

'Tis God, I say, and cry no more,  
But rise, and am content  
To sit for ages at the door  
Till answer more is sent.

## XVI.

But is it God?—Once more the fear  
Of *No God* loads my breath ;  
Amidst a sunless atmosphere,  
I rise to fight with death.

Such rest may be but that which lulls  
The man who fainting lies ;  
His bloodless brain his spirit dulls,  
With darkness veils his eyes.

But even this, my heart responds,  
May be the ancient rest,  
Swelling again from broken bonds  
To flow and fill the breast.

---

The o'ertasked will falls down aghast,  
In individual death ;  
Then God takes up the severed past,  
And breathes the primal breath.

For Torture's self can breed no calm,  
Nor Death to Life give birth ;  
No Labour can create the balm  
That soothes the sleeping earth.

So I will hope it is The One  
Whose life is life to me,  
Who, when my strength is overdone,  
Inspires serenity.

XVII.

When the hot sun's too urgent might  
Hath shrunk the tender leaf,  
The dew slides down the blessed night,  
And cools its fainting grief.

When poet's heart is in eclipse,  
A glance from childhood's eye,  
A smile from passing maiden's lips,  
Will clear a glowing sky.

Might not from God such influence come  
The spirit to uplift?  
Could he not send, in trouble, some  
Unmediated gift?

My child is moaning. Far in dreams,  
Oppressed with visions ill,  
A universe that hopeless seems  
She wanders, moaning still.

I lay my hand upon her breast;  
Her moaning dies away;  
She waketh not; but, lost in rest,  
Sleeps on into the day.

And when my heart with soft release  
Grows calm as summer-sea,  
Shall I not hope the God of Peace  
Hath laid his hand on me?



## XVIII.

But why should doubt from thought result,  
And best belief imbue?  
Why should I not with joy exult,  
Knowing my visions true?

God will not give a little boon  
To turn thee from the best;  
A granted sign might all too soon  
Rejoice thee into rest.

Yet could not any sign, though grand  
As hosts of fire about,  
Though lovely as a sunset-land,  
Secure thy soul from doubt.

A smile from one thou lovest well  
May glad thee all the day:  
All day afar thy doubt may dwell—  
Return with twilight gray.

For doubt will come, will ever come,  
Though signs be perfect-good,  
Till face-to-face strikes doubting dumb,  
And both are understood.

## XIX.

I shall behold him though not now.  
One day, in God's light keen,  
Thy blossom bursts, my heart, and thou  
Seest as thou art seen.

Of nothing canst thou, heart, be sure,  
Except the highest, best :  
When God thou seest with vision pure,  
That sight will be thy Rest.

So I will look with longing eye,  
And still my hope renew ;  
Still think that comfort from the sky  
Comes like a falling dew./

## XX.

But if a vision should unfold  
That I might banish fear ;  
That I, the chosen, might be bold,  
And walk with upright cheer ;

My heart would cry : But shares my race  
In this great love of Thine ?  
I pray, put me not in good case,  
If others lack and pine.

Nor claim I thus a place above  
Thy table's very foot ;  
'Tis only that I love no love  
That springs not from the root ;

That gives me not my being's claim ;  
That says not *child* to me ;  
That calls not all men by the name  
Of children to His knee.

For if to all thou didst not give,  
But gav'st to me the word,

It would not be because I live,  
And thou didst make me, Lord.

## XXI.

And little comfort would it bring,  
Amidst a throng to pass ;  
To stand with thousands worshipping  
Upon the sea of glass ;

To know that, of a sinful world,  
I one was saved as well ;  
My roll of ill with theirs upfurled,  
And flung in deepest hell ;

That God looked bounteously on one,  
Because on many men ;  
As shone Judea's earthly sun  
On all the healed ten.

No ; thou must be a God to me,  
As if I stood alone ;  
I such a perfect child to thee,  
As if thou hadst but one.

## XXII.

Then, O my Father, hast thou not  
A blessing even for me?  
Shall I be, barely, not forgot?  
Dwell none at home with thee?

Hast thou no care for this one child  
This thinking, living me?  
Or is thy countenance only mild,  
Not tender heartily?

Art thou not, by infinitude,  
Able in every man  
To turn thyself to every mood  
Since ever life began?

Art thou not each man's God—his own,  
With secret words between,  
As thou and he did live alone,  
Inspired in silence keen?

Some awful joy I need alway  
To make me strong and free :

Yea, such a friend—oh ! all the day—  
As thou alone canst be.

Ah God ! my heart is not the same  
As any heart beside ;  
Nor is my sorrow or my blame,  
My tenderness or pride.

My story too, thou knowest, God,  
Is different from the rest ;  
Thou knowest—none but thee—the load  
With which my heart is pressed.

Hence I to thee such love can bring,  
As other none can do ;  
Hence I to thee a song can sing  
Which must be, shall be new.

XXIII.

Nor seek I thus to stand apart  
In thee, my kind above ;

'Tis only that my aching heart  
Must rest ere it can love.

If thou love not, I have no care,  
No power to love, no hope.  
What is life here or anywhere?  
Or why with darkness cope?

I scorn love's every motion, sign,  
So feeble, selfish, low,  
If thy love give no pledge that mine  
One day divine shall grow.

Strong men may hold a festival  
Even at the gates of death :  
I am too weak to live at all,  
Except I breathe thy breath.

But tell me thy love cannot fail,  
Is deep, is tender, near :  
Gehenna's gates shall not prevail  
To turn me back with fear.

Once let me know thou lovest well,  
My love will rise and flow,



Forth on my kindred gush and swell,  
My kindred—all below.

Then, brothers, sisters, fellow-men,  
By love my life were healed ;  
In each of you beholding then  
My God anew revealed.

## XXIV.

Nor can I brook that men should say—  
Nor this for gospel take—  
That thou wilt hear me if I pray.  
Asking for Jesus' sake.

For love to him is not to me,  
And cannot bless my fate ;  
The love is not that is not free,  
To each immediate.

Love is salvation. Life without  
No moment can endure.  
Those sheep alone go in and out,  
Who know thy love is pure.

## XXV.

But what if God requires indeed,  
For cause yet unrevealed,  
Assent to moulded form of creed,  
Such as I cannot yield?

The words may have some other sense,  
Or we be different  
From what we seem when thought intense  
Is only one way bent.

Or what if all-distorting pride  
Shows me the good thing ill?  
For man, they say, hath God defied,  
And walks with stubborn will.

Or God may choose to give a test  
To try man's earnest aim,  
That only he may win the best,  
Who conquers pride and shame.

Alas ! the words I cannot say  
With the responding folk ;  
I at his feet a heart would lay,  
Not shoulders for the yoke.

“ And wilt thou bargain them with Him ? ”  
Some priest will make reply.  
I answer : “ Though the sky be dim,  
My hope is in the sky.”

XXVI.

But is my will alive, awake ?  
The true God will not heed  
If in my lips or hands I take  
A half word or half deed.

Day follows day wherein I dream  
Amazed in outwardness ;  
The powers of things that only seem  
The real things oppress ;

Till in my soul some discord sounds,  
Till sinks some yawning lack :  
I turn me from life's rippling rounds,  
And unto thee come back.

Thou seest how poor a thing am I ;  
Yet hear, whate'er I be ;  
Despairing of my will, I cry,  
Be God enough for me.

My being low, irresolute,  
I cast before thy feet ;  
And wait, while even prayer is mute  
For what thou judgest meet.

## XXVII.

My safety lies not, any hour,  
In what I generate,  
But in the living, healing power,  
Of that which did create.

If he is God to the incomplete,  
Fulfilling what they need,  
Then I *may* cast before his feet  
A half-word or half-deed.

I bring then to his altar-stair,  
To the love-glorious,  
My very lack of will and prayer,  
And say : Behold me thus.

Oh, gladness ! Are not these words his—  
My heart brimful they fill—  
“ That man shall know the truth who is  
Willing to do His will ” ?

XXVIII.

What is his will?—that I may go  
And do it now, in hope  
That light will rise and spread and flow  
As deed enlarges scope.

There is no need to search the book  
To know my duty clear ;  
Scarce in my heart I need to look,  
It lies so very near.

I know one thing aside to lay :  
I'll watch my action's door.  
One thing I'll go and do straightway  
I did not do before.

Alas ! these are such little deeds !  
No glory in their birth !  
Grave doubt their common aspect breeds,  
If God will count them worth.

But then I am not left to choose ;  
He maketh such my lot ;  
And mightiest deeds much glory lose,  
If small ones are forgot.

I am not worthy great things yet ;  
I'll humbly do my own ;  
Good care of sheep may so beget  
A fitness for the throne.

But ah ! why should I reason thus,  
Ambition's very fool ?  
Through high and low, each glorious,  
Shines God's all-perfect rule.

'Tis God I need, not rank in good ;  
'Tis life, not honour's meed ;  
Breathing his breath, in every mood,  
I am content indeed.

XXIX.

*Will do : shall know :* I feel the force,  
Completeness of the word ;  
His holy boldness held its course,  
And claimed divine accord.

It may be I have never seen  
The true face of the Man ;  
The named notion may have been  
A likeness vague and wan ;



Or bright with such unblended hues  
As on his chamber wall  
The humble peasant gladly views,  
And Jesus Christ doth call.

The story lay with open page  
Before my open eyes :  
It never seemed the heritage  
Of my waste childhood's cries.

The tale I never sought to scan  
With inward vision strong ;  
I have not tried to see the Man,  
The many words among.

Some faces that would never please  
With any sweet surprise,  
Dawn, ne'ertheless, by slow degrees,  
A very home of eyes.

And if I ponder, day by day,  
O'er this dim-featured space,  
The mist mayhap will melt away,  
Disclose a human face.

A face ! Yea even, exalting thought !  
That face may dawn on me,  
Which Moses on the mountain sought,  
God would not let him see.

## XXX.

I read and read the ancient tale.  
A gracious form I mark ;  
But dim and faint as wrapt in veil  
Of Sinai's cloudy dark.

I see a man, a very man,  
Who walks the earth erect,  
Nor stoops his noble head to one  
From fear or false respect.

He seeks to climb no high estate,  
Or lowly praise secure,  
With high and low serenely great,  
Because his ends are pure ;

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Nor walks alone, beyond our reach,  
Our joy and pain beyond :  
He counts it joy divine to teach,  
When human hearts respond ;

And sorrow's night arose in him  
From human souls that slept :  
" How often, O Jerusalem !"  
He said, and gazed, and wept.

Nor love's return for end he put ;  
His own love was his dower ;  
This joy it was his being's root,  
That joy his being's flower.

Some hidden well flowed full of grace,  
Within his spirit blest,  
Reflecting still the Father's face,  
Beheld from Mary's breast.

O Life of Jesus, the unseen,  
Which found such glorious show !  
Deeper than death, and more serene  
Such life I too must know.

Into that living well to gaze,  
Kneeling upon its brink,  
Be my returning thought always—  
To see what thou didst think.

'Twill be to find thy heart above—  
Obedience deepest still ;  
Seeking not even thy father's love,  
Seeking alone his will.

\* \* \* \* \*

## XXXI.

Years, years have passed since thus I sought  
To picture out the strife,  
When Death, in young and fearing thought,  
Stands face to face with Life.

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More of the tale I tell not so—

One thing alone would say :

My heart is quiet with what I know,

With what I hope, is gay.

And where I cannot set my faith,

Unknowing or unwise,

I say “ If this be what He saith,

Here hidden treasure lies.”

Through years gone by since thus I strove,

Thus shadowed out my strife,

While at my history I wove,

Thou didst weave in the life.

’Through poverty that had no lack

For friends divinely good ;

Through pain that not too long did rack ;

Through love that understood ;

Through light that taught me what to hold,

And what to cast away ;

Through thy forgiveness manifold,

And things I cannot say,

Here thou hast brought me—able now  
To kiss thy garment's hem,  
Entirely to thy will to bow,  
And trust thee even for them

Who, lost in darkness, in the mire,  
With ill-contented feet,  
Walk trailing loose their white attire,  
For the sapphire-floor unmeet.

Lord Jesus Christ, I know not how—  
With this blue air, blue sea,  
This yellow sand, that grassy brow,  
All isolating me—

My words to thee should yet draw near.  
My thoughts be heard by thee ;  
But he who made the ear must hear,  
Who made the eye, must see.

Thou mad'st the hand with which I write,  
That sun descending slow  
Through rosy gates, that purple light  
On waves that shoreward go,

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Bowing their heads in golden spray,  
As if thy foot were near :  
I think I know thee, Lord, to-day,  
Have known thee many a year.

I know thy father—thine and mine—  
Thy mouth hath spoken so :  
If thy great word the words combine,  
I will not say *Not so*.

Lord, thou hast much to make me yet—  
A feeble infant still :  
Thy thoughts, Lord, in my bosom set,  
Fulfil me of thy will,

Even of thy truth, both in and out,  
That so I question free :  
The man that feareth, Lord, to doubt,  
In that fear doubteth thee.





SONGS OF THE DAYS AND NIGHTS.



## SONGS OF THE SUMMER DAYS.

### I.

A GLORY on the chamber wall !  
A glory in the brain !  
Triumphant floods of glory fall  
On wood, and hill, and plain.

The earth lies still in hopeless bliss :  
She has, and seeks no more ;  
Forgets that days come after this,  
Forgets the days before.

Each ripple waves a flickering fire  
Of gladness, as it runs ;  
They laugh and flash, and leap and spire,  
And toss ten thousand suns.

Hark ! in the human world within,  
One low æolian tone :  
“ But shall we ever, ever win  
A summer of our own ? ”

## II.

A morn of winds and swaying trees,  
Earth's jubilance rushing out ;  
The birds are fighting with the breeze,  
The waters heave about.

White clouds are swept across the sky,  
Dark shadows o'er the graves ;  
Purpling the green, they float and fly  
Athwart the sunny waves.

The long grass—an earth-rooted sea—  
Mimics the watery strife.  
To boat, or horse ? Wild motion we  
Shall find harmonious life.

But whither ? Roll and sweep and bend  
Suffice for Nature's part ;

But motion to an endless end  
Is needful for our heart.

## III.

The morn awakes like brooding dove,  
With outspread wings of gray ;  
Her feathery clouds close in above,  
And build a sober day.

No motion in the deeps of air,  
No trembling in the leaves ;  
A still contentment everywhere,  
That neither laughs nor grieves.

A shadowy veil of silvery gray  
Bedims the ocean's hue ;  
White-winged feluccas tear their way,  
In tracks of gorgeous blue.

Dream on, dream on, O dreamy day !  
Thy very clouds are dreams ;  
Yon child is dreaming far away,  
And is not where he seems.

## IV.

The lark is up, his faith is strong,  
He mounts the morning air ;  
The voice of all the creature-throng,  
He sings the morning prayer.

Slow clouds from north and south appear,  
Black-based, with shining slope ;  
In sullen forms their might they rear,  
And climb the vaulted cope.

A lightning-flash, a thunder-boom—  
Nor sun nor clouds are there ;  
One universal aching gloom  
Pervades the heavy air.

A weeping, wasting afternoon  
Weighs down the aspiring corn :  
Amber and red, the sunset soon  
Leads back to golden morn.

## SONGS OF THE SUMMER NIGHTS.

### I.

THE dreary wind of night is out,  
Homeless and wandering slow ;  
O'er pallid seas it sweeps about,  
O'er islands waste and low.

Gray ghosts of dead thought sail aghast  
Hither adown its tide :  
It blows from out the helpless Past,  
Where doleful things abide.

It brings no message unto me,  
O'er wide moors billowing ;  
'Tis not a flowing wind, I see—  
An ebbing woesome thing.



Nay, come to me, sweet wind of night!  
The death is all in me ;  
Blow on and on, with gentle might,  
Until I wake and see.

## II.

The west is broken into bars  
Of orange, gold, and gray ;  
Gone is the sun, come are the stars,  
And night infolds the day.

My boat glides on the gliding stream,  
Whose flitting, flowing breast  
Is lighted with one fading gleam,  
The death-smile of the west.

The river flows : the sky is still ;  
It hath no ceaseless quest ;  
Sad hearts and eyes may flow and fill  
To think of such a rest.

The stream flows on. The skies repose  
All night the starbeams play.

In clouds and gleams the river flows.  
The sky is clear alway.

## III.

I hear a lone wind, lost amid  
The long luxurious grass ;  
The bats flit round me, born and hid  
In twilight's wavering mass.

The fir-top floats, an airy isle,  
High o'er the mossy ground ;  
Harmonious silence breathes the while  
In scent instead of sound.

The flaming rose glooms swarthy red ;  
The borage gleams more blue ;  
And low white flowers, with starry head,  
Glimmer the rich dusk through.

Woo on, with odour wooing me,  
Faint rose with fading core ;  
For God's rose-thought, that blooms in thee,  
Will bloom for evermore.

## IV.

What art thou, gathering dusky cool,  
In slow gradation fine?  
Death's lovely shadow, flickering full  
Of eyes about to shine?

When weary Day goes down below,  
Leanest thou o'er his grave,  
Revolving all the vanished show  
The gracious splendour gave?

Or art thou not she rather—say—  
Dark-browed, with luminous eyes,  
Of whom is born the mighty Day,  
That fights and saves and dies?

For action sleeps with sleeping light;  
Calm thought awakes with thee:  
The soul becomes a summer night,  
With stars that shine and see.

## SONGS OF THE AUTUMN DAYS.

### I.

WE bore him through the golden land,  
One early harvest morn.  
The corn stood ripe on either hand—  
He knew all about the corn.

How shall the harvest gathered be  
Without him standing by?  
Without him walking on the lea,  
The sky is scarce a sky.

The year's glad work is almost done ;  
The land is rich in fruit ;  
Yellow it floats in air and sun—  
Earth holds it by the root.

Why should earth hold it for a day,  
When harvest-time is come?  
Death is triumphant o'er decay,  
And leads the perfect home.

## II.

Yet shines the sun as bright and warm ;  
All comfort is not lost ;  
Both corn and hope, of heart and farm,  
Lie hid from coming frost.

The woods are mournful, richly sad ;  
Their leaves are red and gold :  
Are thoughts in solemn splendour clad  
Signs too that men grow old ?

Strange odours haunt the doubtful brain  
From fields and days gone by ;  
And sad-eyed memories again  
Are born, are loved, and die.

The morning clear, the evening cool  
Foretell no wintery wars ;

The day of dying leaves is full ;  
The night is full of stars.

## III.

'Tis late before the sun will rise ;  
All early he will go ;  
A vaporous frost hangs from the skies,  
And wets the ground below.

Red fruit has followed golden corn ;  
The leaves are few and sere ;  
My thoughts are old as soon as born,  
And gray with coming fear.

The winds are still ; no softest breath  
Floats through the branches bare ;  
A silence as of coming death  
Is growing in the air.

But what must fade, can bear to fade,  
Can stand beneath the ill :  
Creep on, old Winter, deathly shade !  
We sorrow, and are still.

## IV.

There is no longer any heaven  
To glorify our clouds ;  
The rising vapours downward driven,  
Come home for palls and shrouds.

The sun himself is ill bested  
A heavenly sign to show ;  
His radiance, dimmed to glowing red,  
Can hardly further go.

An earthy cold, a churchyard gloom  
Pervade the moveless air ;  
The year is sinking to its tomb,  
And death is everywhere.

But while dark thoughts together sweep  
On sad sepulchral wing,  
God's children, in their beds asleep,  
Are dreaming of the spring.

## SONGS OF THE AUTUMN NIGHTS.

### I.

O NIGHT, send up the harvest moon  
To walk about the corn ;  
To make of midnight magic noon,  
And ripen on till morn.

In golden ranks, with golden crowns,  
All in the yellow land,  
Old solemn kings in rustling gowns,  
The sheaves moon-charmed stand.

Sky-mirror she, afloat in space,  
Beholds our coming morn :  
Her heavenly joy hath such a grace,  
It ripens earthly corn ;



Like some lone saint with upward eyes,  
Lost in the deeps of prayer :  
The people still their prayers and sighs,  
And gazing ripen there.

## II.

So, like the corn, moon-ripened last,  
Would I, weary and gray,  
On golden memories ripen fast,  
And ripening pass away.

In an old night so let me die ;  
A slow wind out of doors ;  
A waning moon low in the sky ;  
A vapour on the moors ;

A fire just dying in the gloom ;  
Earth haunted all with dreams ;  
A sound of waters in the room ;  
A mirror's moony gleams ;

And near me, in the sinking night,  
More thoughts than move in me,

Forgiving wrong, and loving right,  
And waiting till I see.

## III.

Across the stubble glooms the wind ;  
High sails the lated crow ;  
The west with pallid green is lined ;  
Fog tracks the river's flow.

My heart is cold and sad. I moan,  
Yet care not for my woe.  
The summer fervours all are gone ;  
The roses—let them go !

Old age is coming, frosty, hoar ;  
The snows of time will fall ;  
My jubilation, dream-like, no more  
Returns for any call.

O lapsing heart ! thy feeble strain  
Sends up the blood so spare,  
That my poor withering autumn brain  
Sees autumn everywhere.

## IV.

Lord of my life ! if I am blind,  
Be thou my eyes to see ;  
Live on within my heart and mind ;  
Be life and truth in me.

*I* made no brave bright suns arise,  
Veiled up no sweet gray eves ;  
*I* hung no rose-lamps, lit no eyes,  
Sent out no windy leaves.

*I* said not " I will cast a charm  
These gracious forms around " ;  
My heart with unwilled love grew warm ;  
I took but what I found.

When cold winds range my winter-night,  
Be thou my summer-door ;  
Keep for me all my young delight,  
Till I am old no more.

## SONGS OF THE WINTER DAYS.

### I.

THE earth is black and cold and hard.  
Thin films of dry white ice,  
Across the rugged wheel-tracks barred,  
The children's feet entice.

Dark flows the stream as if it mourned  
The winter in the land ;  
By frosty idleness adorned  
That mill-wheel soon will stand.

The blue sky turned its heart away,  
The earth its sorrow found ;  
The daisies turned from childhood's play,  
And crept into the ground.

Draw closer, friends ; we will not part ;  
That would let in the cold ;  
We'll make a summer of the heart,  
And laugh at winter old.

## II.

With clear dead gleam the morning white  
Comes through the window-panes ;  
The clouds have fallen all the night,  
Without the noise of rains.

Like a departing, unseen ghost,  
Footprints go from the door ;  
The man must long ere now be lost  
Who left those footprints hoar.

Yet follow thou. Tread down the snow.  
Leave all the road behind.  
Heed not the steely winds that blow,  
Heed not the sky unkind.

And when the glittering air grows dark,  
The snow will shine like morn ;

Till from thy cot one radiant spark  
Shall laugh the night to scorn.

## III.

Oh wildly wild the winter-blast  
Is whirling round the snow !  
The wintry storms are up at last,  
And care not how they go.

In wreaths and mists the frozen white  
Is torn into the air ;  
It pictures, in the dreary light,  
An ocean in despair.

Come, darkness ! rouse the fancy more—  
Awake the silent sea ;  
Till, roaring in the tempest-roar,  
It rave to ecstasy ;

And sheeted figures, long and white  
Sweep through the driving spray,  
Fading into the ghastly night,  
With death-cries far away.

## IV.

A morning clear, with frosty light  
From sunbeams late and low ;  
They shine upon the snow so white,  
And shine back from the snow.

Down icy spears one drop will go—  
Nor fall. It shines at noon  
A diamond in the sun, to grow  
An opal in the moon.

And when the bright sad sun is low  
Behind the mountain-dome,  
A twilight wind will come and blow  
All round the children's home ;

And puff and waft the powdery snow,  
As night's dim footsteps pass.  
But waiting in its grave below  
Green lies the summer grass.

## SONGS OF THE WINTER NIGHTS.

### I.

I FROM my window look. My fire  
Burns outside in the snow,  
As peace in hearts that still aspire  
Lights grief of long ago.

The dark is thinned by snowy light—  
A moon of snow outspread ;  
The stars must see us well to-night—  
Dressed like the holy dead.

In the white garden lies a heap  
As brown as deep-dug mould ;  
Some fifty partridges that keep  
Each other from the cold.



With sheaves my father took their part—  
With shelter and with food :  
No marvel is my hoping heart—  
My father was so good.

## II.

The frost weaves dreams of torrid climes  
Across my lattice-pane ;  
The frost weaves dreams of childhood's times  
Across my manhood's brain.

Quiet ecstasy fills heart and head :  
My father's in the room :  
The very curtains of my bed  
Are full of sheltering gloom.

They melt. My father is away ;  
I am a child no more ;  
Work rises from the floor of play,  
Duty is at the door.

But if I face with courage stout  
The labour and the din,

Thou, Lord, wilt let my mind go out,  
My heart with thee stay in.

## III.

The ear can see without the sun,  
An eye that needs no spark,  
The door to which the soul doth run  
When other doors are dark.

I hear the dull unheeding wind  
Blow over heath and wold ;  
I leave my body, and my mind  
Floats out into the cold.

Still as a dead man's face forgot,  
O'er which the vault is bowed,  
Earth smiles not, water mirrors not ;  
The earth is in its shroud.

O'er leafless woods, o'er cornless farms,  
Frozen rivers, silent thorps,  
I brood, the heart, still throbbing, warm,  
Within cold Nature's corpse.

## IV.

As blind as Milton here I lie ;  
My "drop serene" is—night,  
With vapours piled on vapours high,  
And snows that fall and fight.

'Tis but a cloud that comes too nigh ;  
The awful, simple stars  
Beyond are shining carelessly :  
These elemental wars

Reach not to them. And when I climb  
Above the storms of life,  
I shall behold the lord of time,  
The ruler of the strife.

Ah ! Lord, I cannot stay till then—  
Nor find I thus my goal.  
Homeward I turn ; no alien,  
I find thee in my soul.

## SONGS OF THE SPRING DAYS.

### I.

A GENTLE wind of western birth,  
From some far summer sea,  
Wakes daisies in the wintry earth,  
Wakes thoughts of hope in me.

The sun is low ; the paths are wet,  
And dance with frolic hail ;  
The trees, whose spring-time is not yet,  
Swing sighing in the gale.

Young gleams of sunshine peep and play ;  
Thick vapours crowd between ;  
'Tis strange that on a coming day  
The earth will all be green.

The north wind blows, and blasts, and raves,  
And flaps his snowy wing :  
Back ! toss thy bergs on arctic waves,  
Thou canst not stay our spring.

## II.

Up comes the primrose, wondering ;  
The snowdrop droopeth by ;  
The holy spirit of the spring  
Is working silently.

Sweet-breathing odours gently wile  
Earth's other children out ;  
On nature's face a hopeful smile  
Is flickering about.

When earth lay hard, unlovely, dull,  
And life within her slept,  
Above her heaven grew beautiful,  
And forth her beauty crept.

And though tears fall, as fall they will,  
Smiles wander into sighs.

Yet if the sun keep shining still,  
Her perfect day will rise.

## III.

The sky is smiling over me,  
Hath smiled away the frost,  
Clothed with young green the patient lea,  
With buds the wood embossed.

The trees yet shut not out the sky,  
It sees down to the flowers ;  
They lift their beauty fearlessly,  
They hide in leafy bowers.

This day is yours, sweet birds ; sing on ;  
The cold is all forgot ;  
Ye had a dream, but it is gone :  
Pain that is past, is not.

Joy that was past, is come again ;  
And if the summer brings  
New care, it is a loving pain,  
That broods instead of sings.

## IV.

Blow on me, wind, from west and south ;  
Sweet summer-spirit, blow !  
Come like a kiss from dear child's mouth,  
Who knows not what I know.

The earth's perfection cometh soon ;  
Ours lingereth alway ;  
We have a spring-time, have a moon,  
No sunny summer-day.

Rose-sprinkled eve, gold-branded morn,  
May still poor Nature's sighs ;  
To us a higher hope is born—  
We rest in that we rise.

But at the last a sapphire day  
All over us will bow ;  
And man's heart, full of sunlight, say,  
“ Lord, 'tis thy summer now.”

SONGS OF THE SPRING NIGHTS.

I.

THE flush of green that dyed the day  
Hath vanished in the moon ;  
The strengthened odours float and play  
A soft unuttered tune.

The tideless sea lay in my view,  
Once, under such a sky ;  
The moon hung half-way from the blue,  
A globe to every eye.

Light-leaved acacias, by the door,  
Stood up in balmy air,  
Clusters of blossomed moonlight bore,  
And breathed a perfume rare.



The gold-flakes of a southern sky  
Fell flashing on the deep :  
One scent of moist earth floating by  
Had almost made me weep.

## II.

Those gorgeous stars were not my own ;  
They made me alien go ;  
The mother o'er her head had thrown  
A veil I did not know.

Those dusky fields that seaward range,  
Behind, those moonlit glades,  
Were full of flowering grasses strange,  
Not slender, spear-like blades.

I longed to see the starry host  
Far-off in paler blue ;  
For grass to lie in and be lost,  
And see them glimmer through.

The homely glories of my birth  
Lay far across the foam :

---

Then came that odour from the earth—  
I knew the world my home.

## III.

The stars exult in darksome space ;  
Friendly is night to them ;  
From day's deep mine, with growing grace,  
The night lifts every gem.

A thing for faith mid work and war,  
The blinding day-flag furled,  
To us then shines a distant star,  
To God, a home-filled world.

“What boots it in this busy scene  
For such a fancy grope ?”  
Revealing darkness comes between—  
It dawns a star of hope ;

Yet but a star with glimmer and glance  
Down stairless deeps to shine :  
A hope to our poor ignorance—  
To God a truth divine.

## IV.

The night is damp and warm and still,  
And full of summer-dreams ;  
The buds are bursting at their will,  
And soft the half moon gleams.

My soul is cool, as bathed within  
By dews that silent weep ;  
Like child that has confessed his sin,  
And now will go to sleep.

A childhood new, Lord, thou dost set,  
Each season for a sign ;  
Lest, old in this world, we forget  
That we are young in thine.

A child, Lord, make me ever more ;  
Let years fresh sonship bring,  
Till, out of age's winter sore,  
I pass into thy spring.

PARABLES.



### THE THREE HORSES.

WHAT shall I be?—I will be a knight  
Walled up in armour black,  
With a sword of sharpness, a hammer of might,  
And a spear that will not crack ;  
So black, so blank, no glimmer of light  
Will betray me on my track.

Saddle my coal-black steed, my men,  
Which Ravenwing I call ;  
The night is rising from the fen,  
And the sky is like a pall ;  
Bad things are creeping from the den,  
And down the darkness fall.

Let him go !—let him go ! Let him plunge !—  
Keep away !  
He's a foal of Night's own brood.

Like a skeleton-charger, in gaunt array  
Of poitrel and frontlet good,  
With clang and clatter he bounds away  
Straight for the evil wood.

Woe to the thing that checks our force  
That meets us in career !  
Giant, enchanter, devil, or worse,  
He goes down before my spear.  
I and Ravenwing on the course—  
Hearken, wicked, and fear !

Through the trees clanking I ride.  
The goblins flit to and fro.  
From the skull of the darkness, deep and wide,  
The eyes of the dragons glow.  
From the thickets the silent serpents glide.  
But I pass—I let them go.

For I shall come ere the morning light,  
On some child that cries alone ;  
On some noble knight, o'ermatched in fight,  
Outbreathed, and all but gone ;

---

Or spur to a half-seen glimmer white,  
And a half-heard lady's moan.

I shall bear the child, as in a nest,  
Between sheltering wings of steel ;  
His tiny form, to my hauberk prest,  
Like a trembling bird will feel,  
As I bear him home to his mother's breast,  
For her lips to kiss and heal.

And spur in flank, and lance in rest,  
On the old knight's foes I flash ;  
And scatter the knaves to east and west,  
With clang and tumult and crash ;  
And leave them the law, as such learn it best,  
In bruise, and breach, and gash.

And the lady I lift to my saddle-bow,  
And gently sinks her wail,  
And her heaving heart grows quiet and slow,  
Slumbering against my mail,  
As home to my mother's bower we go,  
Where a welcome will not fail.



Home through the fog of the evil night,  
Where glow the dragons' eyes,  
Where wander the lawless men of might,  
And the goblin-things arise ;  
Home with a knight that loves the right,  
And will mount for it till he dies.

Alas ! 'tis a boy's wild dream—that is all !  
In the fens no dragons blow ;  
Into giants' hands no ladies fall ;  
Through the forest wide roadways go.  
If I love a maiden, and ever shall,  
No deeds my love can show.

I will not saddle old Ravenwing ;  
I will not ride by night ;  
No spectre would cross my galloping,  
But the moonbeams long and white ;  
No goblins—but birds from their slumbering  
Flitting an arrow's flight.

Bridle me Twilight, my dapple-gray,  
With broad rein and gentle bit ;  
Let a youth bring him round to the door, I say,

---

As the shadows begin to flit,  
Just as the darkness dreams into day,  
And the owls begin to sit.

And all the armour I will wear  
Is a sword, like the first blue-gray  
That to right and left doth mow and share  
The grisly darkness away  
From the gates of the morning, still and fair,  
By which walks out the day.

I leave the arched forest grim,  
And into the broad land ride.  
The torrent is deep : we plunge and swim.  
The cold light wets the tide,  
From the opening east, like the splashes dim  
On my Twilight's dappled side.

We pass like morn o'er dale and hill,  
O'er desert, moor, and beach ;  
In the markets Twilight standeth still,  
And I lift my voice and preach :  
Men hear and come and gather, until  
Ten thousand men I teach.

---

I tell them of justice, I speak of truth,  
Of law, and of social wrong ;  
My words are moulded by right and ruth  
Into a solemn song ;  
And the upturned faces of age and youth  
Gather the cadence long.

They bring me causes from all the land,  
That strife may be forgot ;  
The balance swerves to neither hand ;  
The poor I favour not.  
If a man withstand—outsweeps my brand—  
I slay him upon the spot.

But is this *my* calling? Dare I slay  
Another such as I?  
My hands have not been clean alway,  
My own sin is too nigh.  
I will not ride the dapple-gray,  
Nor lift my voice on high.

I dare not judge ; I dare not kill ;  
The sword I will not wear.  
One ministry remaineth still—

---

Good tidings I will bear.  
As the sun looks over the eastern hill,  
Bring out my snow-white mare.

Take heed, my men, that from crest to heel  
She has neither spot nor speck.  
No curb, no bit her mouth shall feel,  
No tightening rein her neck ;  
No saddle-girth, with buckles of steel,  
Her mighty breathing check.

Lay on her a cloth of silver sheen ;  
Bring me a robe of white ;  
That all our course we may be seen  
By the shining of our light—  
A glistening glory in forests green,  
A star on the mountain-height.

Like an angel-horse, with a winged bound  
Forth to the wind she leaps ;  
Full-filled of light, she skims the ground  
Into the forest-deeps,  
Where a torrent of shadows without a sound,  
Over her ripples and sweeps.

And the sun and the wind are life and love.

Where the serpent slined the bark,  
Broods the silent, the shining dove.

Where dragons breathed the dark,  
Glad troops of children, below, above,  
Gather with hollo and hark.

It is joy, it is joy to ride the world

With a message such as this—  
That the flag of war is for ever furled,  
That peace and righteousness kiss.  
See! the mane of my mare by the glad winds curled,  
Is the white flag of coming bliss.

And maidens with eyes of light look up

From the infants about their feet,  
With lapfuls of green blade and golden cup,  
A weaving of garlands sweet ;  
But on I gallop—I dare not stop—  
Good news should ever be fleet.

And I bear a message of might and mirth—

The dawn of another morn.  
I carry abroad the news of birth

---

Through city and land of corn.  
Gracious gladness shall clothe the earth,  
For a child, a child is born.

Strange message! What means it?—*A child is born!*

It means the old earth grows young;  
That the heart, with sin and its sadness torn,  
Grows whole and happy and strong;  
No more the fountain of fear and scorn,  
But a fountain of praising song.

I will tell, I will tell what the message saith:

That the spirit no more shall pine;  
That self shall die an ecstatic death,  
And be born a thing divine;  
That God's own joy and God's own breath  
Shall fill us with living wine;

That Ambition shall vanish, and Love be king,  
And Pride lower and lower lie;  
Till, for very love of a living thing,  
A man would forget and die,  
If very love were not the spring  
That all life liveth by.

Saith it this?—all this?—I dare not ride.

I am a fool—a beast.

A labour for which God's kings have sighed !

Anointing myself a priest !—

In the worst of all pride—to sit beside

The Master of the feast !

Alas ! alas !—Lead her back again.

No radiant courser I need.

I am overweening, ignorant, vain.

Yet, Lord—I will take good heed—

Let me wash the hoofs and comb the mane

Of the shining gospel-steed.

## THE GOLDEN KEY.

NIGHT'S drooping flags were slowly furled ;  
The sun arose in joy ;  
The boy awoke, and all the world  
Was waiting for the boy.

And out he ran. Lo ! everywhere  
Was full of windy play ;  
The earth was bright and clean and fair,  
All for his holiday.

The hill said "Climb me ;" and the wood,  
"Come to my bosom, child ;  
I'm full of gambols ; they are good,  
My children, and so wild !"



He went, he ran. Dark grew the skies,  
And pale the skinking sun.  
“How soon,” he said, “for clouds to rise,  
When day was but begun !”

The wind grew wild. A wilful power,  
It swept o’er tree and town.  
The boy exulted for an hour,  
Then sat with head bowed down.

And as he sat the rain began,  
And rained till all was still :  
He looked, and saw a rainbow span  
The vale from hill to hill.

He dried his tears. “Ah ! now,” he said,  
“The storm brings good to me :  
Yon shining hill—upon its head  
I’ll find the golden key.”

But ere, through wood and over fence,  
He could the summit scale,  
The rainbow’s foot was lifted thence,  
And planted in the vale.

---

“But here it stood. Yes, here,” he said,  
Its very foot was set ;  
I saw this fir-tree through the red,  
This through the violet.”

He sought and sought, while down the skies  
Went, slowly went the sun.  
At length he lifted hopeless eyes,  
And day was nearly done.

Low radiant clouds of level red  
Lay o'er a sun-filled tomb ;  
And all their rosy light was shed  
On his forgotten home.

“So near me yet ! Oh happy me,  
No farther to have come !  
One day I'll find the golden key,  
But now away for home !”

He rose, he ran, as yet in play,  
But rest was now before ;  
And as the last red streak grew gray  
Opened his father's door.

His father stroked his drooping head,  
And gone were all his harms ;  
His mother kissed him in his bed,  
And heaven was in her arms.

He folded then his weary hands,  
And so they let them be ;  
And ere the morn, in rainbow lands,  
He found the golden key.

## SOMNIUM MYSTICI.

A MICROCOSM IN TERZA RIMA.

### I.

QUIET I lay at last, and knew no more  
Whether I breathed or not. Worn out I lay  
With the death-struggle. What was yet before  
I cared not to meet, nor turned away.  
I knew my being only in its rest  
After the torture of the bygone day,  
And so would linger, painless, nearly blest.  
Followed a dreamy pause ; and then the sound  
As of a door that opened—in the west  
Somewhere I thought it was. The noise unbound  
The sleep from off my eyelids, and they rose,  
And I looked forth ; and, looking, straightway found  
It was my chamber-door that did uncloze ;

And by it came a form into my view,  
Tall, silent, bending almost with repose :  
It was my brother—brother such as few—  
Bowling in kingly wise his noble head.  
Then, when I saw his countenance, I knew  
That I was lying in my chamber dead ;  
For to my side I saw this brother move,  
Whose face from me and his and mine had sped,  
Like a lost summer, leaving only love,  
Years, years ago, behind the unseen veil.  
But though I loved him, all high words above,  
Not for his loss then did I weep or wail,  
Knowing that here we live but in a tent,  
And that our house is yonder, without fail.  
And now I had him. Towards him I bent—  
I too was dead, so might the dead embrace—  
But he stooped not. Silent his hand he lent  
Me to uplift. I was in feeble case,  
But growing stronger, stood up on the floor.  
Right glad I looked upon my own dead face,  
Leaving it there. “I shall not suffer more,”  
It seemed to think. I turned me away,  
My brother leading, to the open door.  
And out we passed, into the night blue-gray.

---

The houses stood up hard in limpid air,  
And the moon hung in heaven in the old way,  
And all the world to my bare feet lay bare.

## II.

Now I had suffered in my life, as men  
Must suffer still, that children they may grow ;  
Suffered to rid me of that self again  
Which I had made and chosen and turned to—so  
Forgetting the angel-self that evermore,  
Moveless, while phantom things flit to and fro,  
Beholds the Father's face, and stands before  
The throne of revelation, waiting there,  
Till we shall find it, far beyond the roar  
Of vain report, that hides the world's despair,  
And lose ourselves in living : I had borne  
Not one pain more than I had need to bear ;  
And thus to speak of suffering I would scorn,  
Even in rhyme, but for what next befell :  
The trouble all had ebbed like night from morn,  
Dissolved and lost in the absorbing swell  
Of some strange peace, a marvel, to me unknown.

As the moon dwelt in heaven, so in me dwell  
Did this essential calm. Earth's wail and moan  
Lay all behind. Had I then lost my part  
In human griefs, my part with them that groan?  
" 'Tis weariness," I said; but with a start  
That set it trembling, and yet brake it not,  
I found the peace was love. O my rich heart!  
For in the blue night every glimmering spot  
Of window-pane behind which lay a room  
Where human being slept—in that soul's lot  
I had a part—I cared for that one, whom  
I knew not, had not seen, and might not see.  
And scarce had love drawn after it its gloom,  
Ere a yet mightier love arose in me,  
As in a sea a single wave might swell,  
And heaved the care up to the centre: we  
Had called it prayer, before on sleep I fell;  
And then it sank, and all was godlike calm:  
I gave each man to God, and all was well.  
On my left hand my brother, with one palm  
Half-stretched out, open and upward, went  
One step before, leading: a heavenly balm  
Flowed from his presence—soon with sadness  
blent.

## III.

No softest murmur through the city crept ;

Not one word had my guide unto me spoken,

Or I to him : no sooner had we stept

From forth the city, than the spell was broken.

A cool night wind came whispering. Through and  
through

It made me blessed with the pledge and token

Of that sweet spirit-wind which blows and blew

In human nature's heart since evermore.

And now beneath my feet the grass I knew,

Which was love too, and with the love I bore

Held mystic sympathy, silent and sweet,

For it had known the glad secret of yore.

So now I long'd my brother's eye to meet,

My brother's voice to hear. Upon the grass

Sudden he stood. I stayed my following feet.

He turned. The face that in the old time was

Again smiled on me. Lord of Life, that smile

Was full of thee, and from me will not pass.

Fulfilled of strength, and childlikeness the while,



---

It was the same old radiance of the soul,  
Able my selfish passions to beguile  
Unto their gladsome death, and on them roll  
The happy stone of the Holy Sepulchre.  
“Brother,” he said, “now thou art like me—whole  
And sound and well ; and all the pain and stir  
Uneasy, and the grief that came to us all  
Because we knew not how the wine and myrrh  
Could ever from the vinegar and gall  
Be parted—all is sunk and drowned in God,  
Who on the past doth let no darkness fall,  
But a sweet blast of light from light's abode,  
That slays the false and bringeth out the true ;  
And in the dreariest path which men have trod,  
Shows prints of saving feet, both old and new,  
Going before them and each weeping friend ;  
Yea, through the desert leading to God's view  
The desert souls in which the lions rend  
And roar—the passionate who to be blest  
Raven as bears, and do not gain their end,  
Because that, save in God, can be no rest.”

## IV.

Something my brother said to me like this.

Like this, I say ; and what more can I say,  
Seeing his eyes, face, and that smile of his,  
Yea his whole presence spoke—each word alway  
Fringed to a star with radiant verity  
Of absolute utterance, making a day  
Of truth about him speaking solemnly?  
Followed a pause ; and after that there came  
A brothers' talk—a gentle ecstasy,  
Of which a part I keep, but keep the same  
Shut in my mind ; another is all a mist,  
With a strange motion, as of hope in flame ;  
As when a vapour by the sun is kissed  
Into a tune of colour, fear beguiling  
With hope of beauty born, which none resist.  
It was a glory full of reconciling,  
Of wisdom, and God's faith, and love, and pain ;  
Of tenderness, and care, and mother-wiling  
Back to the bosom of a speechless gain.

---

How long the time I have forgotten quite ;  
Only no sun arose, and fell no rain.  
It was a pale, moonlit, and starry night,  
Long as the night of some great spongy stone  
That turns but once an age betwixt the light  
And the huge shadow from its own bulk thrown ;  
It seemed such at least—before my face  
So many visions passed, and veils were blown  
Aside from the vague vast of Isis' grace.  
I saw my friends weep, wept, and let them weep  
Right willingly, for in my vacant place  
The Love of God was watching, in their sleep  
Wiping their tears with the napkin he had laid  
Wrapped by itself when he climbed Hades' steep.  
Through lanes and streets I followed, undismayed ;  
Saw brother-men by men despised and cursed ;  
Saw how smooth men on rough men fed and preyed  
And thought themselves thus nobler ; saw the worst  
Of all that looks remediless and waste,  
Savage and cruel, of hatred born, and nursed  
By pain and need, to action urged and chased  
By dim recallings of the now unknown.  
I saw it all. But he shall not make haste  
Who knows that God may give a seed just sown

A thousand years to grow ; a world that lay  
Wombed in its sun, a moment—one alone,  
From his red rim to drop, and spin away,  
Librating ; to take thought, and weary wheel  
Home in the close of heaven's aeonian day.  
Who knows God's day, God's thousand years, shall  
feel

No anxious heart, shall lift no trembling hand ;  
But keen-dividing, as the sword of steel  
That from His mouth went forth in Patmos-land.  
Shall do his work fearless—obedient  
As He unto the Father's good command.  
So with a heart of hope, I onward went,  
Drinking his words, like dew to summer-lea,  
Filling my heart even with my heart's content,  
And came at last upon a lonesome sea.

## v.

Stayless of foot, he turned not from the sea—  
Went on, crushing the bubbles at its brim.  
I followed, and so walked, cool-footed, free,  
Out on the water, fearless following him.

And like a sea of glass the water, lo !  
Lay ever vanishing ; nor shorn, nor dim,  
The starry host made all as glorious show  
Under our feet as o'er our heads. When this  
I saw, a terror to my heart did go.  
Think : we were moving in a vast abyss  
Of world-ingulphing blue ; no floor was found  
Of seeing eye, though the foot met the kiss  
Of the cool sliding waters, crisping round  
The edges of the footsteps. I did close  
My eyes for fear. Then once again the sound  
Of my guide's voice on the still air arose.  
" Think'st thou that we no longer walk by faith,  
Because earth lies behind us with its shows ?  
Open thine eyes ; take a full valiant breath ;  
Be fearless ; dare the terror in God's name ;  
Step wider ; trust the invisible. Can Death  
Hearten no more the burning of thy flame ?"  
I trembled, but I opened wide mine eyes,  
And strode on the invisible sea. The same  
Moment had vanished all my cowardice,  
And God was with me. A hollow sphere of stars,  
All round about me lay the gulfy skies.  
Silent we walked across the broken bars

---

Of moonlight at our feet ; until my guide  
Turned, stood, and looked at me. No human  
scars,  
No furrows of earth's battle I descried  
On his pure countenance. A peace age-long  
Brooded upon his forehead fair and wide.  
Yet with the sight there shot, clear, keen, and strong,  
A pain into my heart : I saw him stand—  
Though in the void as close as in a throng—  
Far on the border of some nameless land  
Beyond my call ; his face's mystery  
Caught him whole worlds away, though in my hand  
His hand I held, and, gazing earnestly,  
Searched in his countenance as in a mine  
For jewels of contentment. Satisfy  
My heart I could not. Sure he did divine  
My hidden trouble, for he stooped and kissed  
My forehead, and his arms did round me twine,  
And held me to his bosom. Still I missed  
The ancient earthly childhood, when we shared  
One bed, like birds that nestled in one nest ;  
Roamed through our father's fields ; together fared  
Along the dusty roads of the old time.  
He stood—as if my soul he just had bared—

Reading it. Up the heaven unseen clouds climb—  
So in his eyes tears gathered like the dew  
That settles on the earth in hoary rime,  
But makes the clear stars goldener in the blue ;  
And on his lips a faint ethereal smile  
Hung trembling, like the mist of its own hue  
That hangs about a purple flower, the while  
That eve is growing brown. “Brother,” I cried ;  
But straight outbursting tears my words beguile,  
And in my bosom all the utterance died.  
“I know thy pain ; but this sorrow is far  
Beyond my help,” gently his voice replied  
Unto my speechless tears. “See’st thou yon star  
Half-way to the horizon, all a-blaze ?  
Think’st thou, because no cloud between doth mar  
The lightning peace that from its visage rays,  
Thou therefore knowest well that world on high,  
Its people and its orders and its ways ?”  
“But I love thee,” I said ; “and therefore I  
Would hold, not thy dear form, but the self-thee.  
Thou art not near me. For my friend I cry.”  
“Not the less near that nearer I can be.  
I have a world within thou dost not know :  
Would I could give it thee ! But all of me



Is thine ; though thou not yet canst enter so  
Into possession, that betwixt us twain  
The frolic homeliness of love should flow  
As o'er the brim of childhood's cup again :  
A deeper childhood first away must wipe  
The consciousness which was our manhood's pain  
The godlike then will in thy breast grow ripe,  
And make thee like me—sons of man once more,  
The children of one father—noble type  
Of the great father all fathers before.”  
Something like this he said, nor ceased, for still  
His voice went on like spring from hidden store  
Of wasteless waters. But I wept my fill,  
Nor heeded much the comfort of his speech.  
At length he said : “When first I clomb the hill—  
With earthly words I heavenly things would reach—  
Where dwelleth now the man we used to call  
Father—ah, brother, how he used to teach  
Us children in our beds ! A temple-hall,  
Became, when he sat there, the common room—  
Prone on the ground before him I did fall,  
So grand he towered above me like a doom ;  
But now I look into the well-known face,  
And feel my heart grow younger in the bloom



---

Of his eternal youthfulness and grace."

"But something separates us," yet I cried,

"And I shall ever be in evil case

Till that begin to melt and to divide,

Making a way for vision. In old time,

To break the bonds by which our souls were tied,

Some holy means lay at the door. To climb,

One foot must rise and lift the other higher :

Teach me some lesson of the eternal prime."

Thereto he answered : "Hearts that will aspire,

Must learn one mighty harmony ere they can

Falter a perfect note in true love's quire.

But thereto am I sent. Come unto one

Who is at hand to teach thee everything,

Opening all doors that sever man and man,

Till to Love's homely palace them he bring."

## VI.

I said no more. For thus he gave me hope,

And hope had ever been enough for me—

Sufficient to the day : it gave me scope,

From bonds of fear and custom set me free,

And let my life go working. On we went  
Over the ocean and its stars, till we  
Came to a level shore of sand and bent.  
Beyond the sand a marshy moor we crossed,  
Silent ; I, for I pondered what he meant,  
And he, that sacred speech might not be lost.  
At length we came upon an evil place.  
Trees lay about like a half-buried host,  
Each in its desolate pool. Some fearful race  
Of creatures was at hand ; for howls and cries  
And gurgling hisses came. With even pace,  
“ Be not afraid,” he said, “ for this way lies  
Our journey.” We went on. And soon the ground  
Slowly from out the waste began to rise ;  
And tender grass, here, there, now all around,  
Came clouding up, with its fresh homely tinge  
Of gentlest green cold-flushing every mound ;  
At length, of lowly shrubs a scattered fringe.

## VII.

And last a wildered forest world we find,  
Not open to the sun : through all the year,  
Its branches sunder not in any wind ;  
A world so still, that all its trees appear  
Pondering on the past, as men may do  
That see God's finger quench the sparks of fear.  
I know not if for days many or few,  
Pathless we threaded the thick forest, for  
No sun at branch-built windows peeping through  
Made shadows on the tender mosses, or  
Warmed my cold feet ; and yet I saw—as men  
See in a vision—to the vision's core.  
We reached a glade, soft with deep grasses, when,  
“Look round,” he said ; and I obeyed him, but  
Saw only great trees stand away—and then,  
In the free midst, a little lonely hut,  
By grassy sweeps wide-margined from the wood.  
'Twas built of saplings yet erect, long cut,  
Clearing the space where since it lonely stood ;  
Now thick with ancient moss, it seemed to have grown

---

Thus from the old brown earth, and ever to brood  
How to go back, nor any more be known.

Up to its door my brother led me. "There,  
There is thy school," he said; "there be thou  
shown

That which thou wouldst. Awake a mind of prayer,  
And praying enter." "But wilt thou not come,  
Brother?" I said. "No," said he. And I, "Where  
Go then thy steps? Thou wilt not leave me dumb  
Amidst a press of thoughts unuttered?"

With half-sad smile, and dewy eyes, and some  
To-and-fro motions of his kingly head,  
He pointed me to the half-open door.

Entering I turned: his form a radiance shed  
All round—one holy smile was at its core,  
He looking after me. Then parting slow  
He went like one whom I should see no more.

Nor heard I any footsteps from me go.

He drew the clinging door unto the post;  
No dry twigs crackled 'neath his going; no  
Waftings of wind rose round my brother-ghost.

He was not. And I laid me down and wept.  
And what from following held me back the most  
Was fear I should not see him if I swept

---

Out after him on wings of famished love.  
To the foot of the wall, hopeless I crept ;  
And cool sleep came, God's shadow, from above.

## VIII.

I woke, with sacred calmness glorified.  
Such peace I used to have, waking, when I  
Lay in my mother's bosom : since I died,  
The past, even to the dreams, fleeting and shy,  
That shadowed over my yet unborn brain,  
Was all uncovered. From a window high,  
Nearly head-high—a little oval pane—  
Dimm'd by night-fogs that rise from out the core  
Of withered leaves, and give an earthy stain—  
A forest light fell brown upon the floor,  
And made the hut faintly and softly glad.  
A little too came in beneath the door ;  
And I remembered in old years I had  
Seen something like it : white-veiled women gloomed  
Upon an earthen floor, with eyelids sad,  
In a low barn-like house, where lay entombed  
Their sires and children ; only there the door  
Was open to the sun, which entering plumed

With shadowed palms the stones that filled the floor,  
Set up like lidless coffins. Thus I find,  
That Memory needs no brain, but keeps her store  
In hidden chambers of the eternal mind ;  
And from the floor of that remembrance, I  
Went back to years all full of mystic signs  
Unreadable, while yet my soul did lie  
Closed in my mother's ; forward then through bright  
Summers of being, glad with hopes that fly  
Bird-like beneath their doming blue and white ;  
Through days of passion, down to low sad eves  
Of drizzling rain, fierce dark, and hopeless night :  
Up to slow dawns in weeping easts, and leaves  
Windy with morning ; twilights of content,  
And worship such as sorrow itself bereaves  
Of half its pain. And ever as I went,  
I knew the odour of a something near  
Which yet I had not—like a letter sent,  
Not yet arrived ; a footstep I could hear  
Upon the threshold—no hand on the latch ;  
A sun on the hill's edge, ready to peer,  
Yet peering not ; a gazing breathless watch  
Over a sleeping beauty—flitting rhymes  
About her lips, no winged word to catch.

Thus had I grown ; but in eternal times  
Shut up I lay, a hopeless evermore  
In low dull gleams of moveless autumn climes.  
Was it the prison of my sins so sore—  
A gentle hell compassion dear foredooms  
For such as I whose love is yet the core  
Of all their being? The brown shadow glooms  
About me, warm, persistent, faded, wan ;  
I lie as in a hearse horrid with plumes,  
To dream, and be no more a living man.  
Meet thus the earthy floor and skyey cope?  
Is this the sepulchre of daylight? Can  
This be the folding of the wings of hope?

## IX.

That moment through the branches overhead,  
Sounds of a going went. A shadow fell  
Prone in the unrippled pool of faint light, fed  
From the one window lighting my poor cell.  
I lifted up my eyes. In the oval space  
A single snowdrop stood, a radiant bell  
Of silvery shine, stroked tenderly with rays



Of delicate green that made the white appear  
As if the sun shone. With a faithful grace  
It bowed its head, as, in a world of fear,  
It could not be afraid. If it had swung  
Its pendent bell, and music silvery clear,  
Had, with division sweet its sounds among,  
Dropped down its meaning tender as flakes of snow,  
It had not shed more influence as it rung,  
Than from its look alone did gracious flow.  
I knew the flower ; saw into its human ways ;  
Beheld God's secret that had made it grow ;  
And in my heart woke music's answering phrase.  
Nature's high laws, beauty's eternal birth,  
And God who bringeth life from out decays,  
Light out of darkness, snowdrops from the earth—  
Truth was all present in that little flower,  
Instinct with the divine. A holy mirth  
Awoke within my heart ; for one whole hour  
I praised the God of snowdrops. Then the stain  
Of weariness fell. Gone was the sacred power,  
And gone the snowdrop from the window pane.



## X.

And I began in unbelief to say :

“ A snowdrop only ! nothing to my heart !

A trifle which God's hands drew forth in play  
From the weedy pond of Chaos, without part

In love divine ; not equalling indeed

A fair embroidery, as of needle's art,

Upon the hem of nature ; a pretty weed

That God nor gardener granteth any claim,

And only dreamers give it dreamful heed.

Not out of God but nothingness it came,

And brought no life, no word, no meaning sweet ;

It might return, and earth would lose no fame.”

When lo, another shadow at my feet !

Uplifting hopeless yet my weary head,

Me the Primrose did at my window greet,

With a broad smile, from out its rough-leaved bed,

Laughing my unbelief to heavenly scorn ;

A flower-child, all awake, on green couch laid,

Saying its prayers, still lying where it was born,

Still looking to the sky. I breathed again ;

Out of the midnight once more came the morn.  
New truth, as child brings love, comes not in vain,  
But brings the new faith fresh from out the deep.  
Though weariness may dull the conscious brain,  
Truth, beauty are not dead. When our hearts sleep,  
The vision tarrieth until the day.  
I tarry also, and I will not weep,  
Not though my heart grow sick with hope's delay.

## XI.

By these two flowers, and by reviving faith  
In him who thought them, I forgot my life,  
And was a child once more, who draws his breath  
Nor thinks of breathing ; knows, without the strife  
That comes of knowing that he knows. My soul  
Was all with forms of childish gladness rife.  
A daisy at my window ? Straightway roll  
Rich fields with red tips crowding through the green,  
Down many a hollow, over many a knoll.  
Each vision leads a host of the unseen.  
In at the window peeps the pimpernel ?  
I stand in morning scents of thyme and bean ;

Dry stalks of grass, each hung with watery bell,  
Stretch round me, jewel-orchard, many roods ;  
Ruby suns flash, which emerald suns would quell ;  
Topaz saint-glories, sapphire beatitudes,  
In coolness of the slanting sun abound ;  
Above, the lark, high priest of fields and woods—  
The colours' odour bearing up in sound,  
Entered unseen within the veil of heaven,  
Still hovering o'er his five eggs on the ground.  
But time would fail to tell what flowers were given,  
What truths they at my window-pane did preach,  
Nodding and smiling. Days, nights, well nigh  
seven,  
I saw them thus. Filled with their floral speech,  
Their lovely silences of shapeful lore,  
I sat a happy child, within whose reach  
The infinite sea flung thought-shells on the shore.  
Seeing was all the senses unto me,  
Seven days—seven years—for time was now no  
more.  
Then I grew weary, longing earnestly.

## XII.

I know not if I slept. No more I know  
If words will clothe aright the wonders high  
That next appeared, that next are mine to show.  
Prone to the revelation I did lie,  
A passive prophet to its visioned sweep,  
Like harp Æolian to the breathing sky,  
Blest as are children whom the curtained sleep  
Holds half, and half lets go, so that they hear  
The whisper of their hearts, so that they keep  
Their dreams unbroken till their mothers peer  
Sunrise upon their rest, and rouse their day.  
At length the hope that still informs in fear  
Woke me. "Ah, flowers," I said, "divinely gay !  
Ye fill not souls that thirst for heavenly wine ;  
Full cups reach not their thirsting to allay  
Who pine for outspread seas of love divine  
As harts for water-brooks." Sudden a face  
Was looking in my face, its eyes in mine—  
Eyes pulsing wells of tenderness and grace :  
I knew them by their love my mother's eyes,

Come reconciling me with all my race.  
For at the sight such love in me did rise,  
That weeping I brake out for all the moan  
My wrongs had caused in this world of cries.  
“O mother, wilt thou plead for me?” I groan ;  
“Not plead with Christ—he pleads alway with me ;  
But plead with those about his humble throne,  
Who know my deeds and my heart do not see.  
O mother, I am gray ; thou young as when  
Death set thy everlasting beauty free.  
Thou didst die soon ; I lived, brought back, times ten,  
From death’s brink, to be led by bliss and woe,  
Gladness and groans, heart-loss and spirit-gain,  
To holy self-indifference, that so  
I might receive, and seek no more my bliss.  
Oh, help me, telling all the souls I know,  
That at Christ’s feet I lay my selfishness ;  
That I do love them, else that I would die :  
They must forgive me, for the truth is this.”  
The face grew passionate at this my cry ;  
Some hidden fountain trembled, swelled, and rose ;  
Tears flowing that love’s pain might thus go by.  
Vanished the face : I wept as one of those  
That from a dream of Paradise awake

---

To see sad hours beside them labouring close  
Its opal gates with stone and beam and stake.

## XIII.

But, O my vision—how to follow thee  
Through what came next—a storm of human grace,  
A host of lovely faces, besieging me  
In the lone castle of my mournfulness!  
Was it my mother that those faces sent,  
Gathering them from the crowd before the face  
They worship ever—when from me she went—  
That they themselves might bring the love I  
sought,  
And with the burnings of their love all bent  
Upon it, burn my self-love up to nought?  
I dreamed, but I do hold my dream as true  
As any message by the senses brought,  
And walk henceforth girt with its heavenly blue,  
Its golden sun still radiant in my hope.  
But how shall pencil dare its rainbow hue?  
How shall I—with what line of mighty scope—  
Lead up your dawn of loveliness, my own,

On other lonely minds?—All, from the cope  
Of heaven down to my windows, in a cone  
Still widening upward, mine ! for my love born !  
Saint-sisters, hero-brothers, known, unknown,  
Beloved faces, many as ears of corn  
Bending one way on autumn harvest-field,  
Leaned downwards to my windowed hut forlorn,  
As if with power of eyes they would have healed  
The heart that lay there moaning selfish fears.  
Faces that with one look might each have sealed  
For evermore one fount of bitter tears !  
Each face a lamp of God, from which did pass  
The light of worship out on all its peers !  
Each knowing self only in others' glass ;  
Seeking no love, or worship, or other grace,  
Which ever endeth in a deep *alas*,  
But offering evermore the heart-embrace !  
Each form upheld in crowding arms of love,  
Each heart upholding all the human race !  
A cloud of chosen witnesses above,  
Came narrowing thus to me in mystic cone ;  
Even thus God's spirit descended like a dove,  
Giving all hearts to one who sat alone :  
I saw the glory widen to a cloud—



---

For I had risen and to the window gone—  
Which far aloft over the forest bowed.

## XIV.

With what I thus beheld, glorified then,  
“God, let me love my fill and die,” I sighed :  
Dead, I for love had almost died again.  
“O fathers, brothers, I am yours,” I cried.  
“O mothers, sisters, I am nothing now  
Save as I am yours ; nothing I am beside.  
O men, O women, of the peaceful brow,  
And infinite abysses in the eyes,  
Whence God’s ineffable looks on me, how  
Care ye for me, impassioned and unwise ?  
But that is nothing, so I may love you.  
Ever, O grandeur, thus before me rise,  
And I am blessed ; for, within your view,  
I am no more, and ye are all in all.  
Henceforth there is, there shall be nothing new,  
For all things now are new.” And like the fall  
Of a steep avalanche, my joy fell steep :  
Up in my spirit rose as it were the call



Of an old sorrow from an ancient deep.  
My eyes had fixed upon the face of him  
Whom I had loved ere I had learned to creep  
On hands and knees about the old world dim ;  
And as I gazed the pang shot into me,  
For there was that about the lovely rim  
Of his blue eyes I could not rightly see ;  
And so the doubt, the trouble once more came,  
And my heart cried " O God," right earnestly,  
" Is this my endless sorrow or endless blame ?  
Can there be more to come ? Is this the last ?  
And is this not enough ? Yet loss the same ?  
O brothers, sisters, is my glory past ? "

## XV.

And at the word the cloud of witnesses  
Turned all their faces sideways, aside from me,  
So that I saw the half of their sweet bliss.  
And o'er that half I saw—what could it be ?—  
A faintly glad, a glimmering glory glide,  
Faint as the glimmers which, from off the sea  
When the slow moon is waking on the tide,

---

O'er the pale face of watching maidens dream.  
Was it the first of a smile? And why aside?  
Or did they wait some dawn of holy beam?  
Then first that it was dead night I did mark,  
Without a moon or stars, or any gleam  
Save that shine, as of silver in the dark,  
Which held my eyes upon their lovely look.  
And as I gazed, it grew. Then, as a spark  
Of vital touch had fallen into a nook  
Where germs of potent harmonies lay prest,  
And breaking the silence that they could not  
brook,  
They sudden burst into their being blest,  
So from that cone of faces burst a song,  
Of such a sweet harmonious unrest,  
That in a storm of weeping—"Lord, how long?"  
I answered it because I could not sing.  
And as they sung, the light, more and more strong,  
Uplighted them, until I scarce could bring  
My eyes the radiance to encounter and bear;  
For light their faces, lightnings their eyes did fling,  
And crowns of light, even their flashing hair,  
Reigned on their brows. "He comes!" they sang;  
"Tis he!

---

O brothers, sisters, lovely, he is there !”  
And as I gazed speechless, it seemed to me  
That all the faces moved : once more their eyes  
Were turning on me ! But the holy glee  
Awoke me to the dark of lower skies.

## XVI.

I woke like one that has been glad in vain,  
Who, free in dreams, awakes to bitterness  
At weary sound of his old clanking chain.  
Yet was my heart light and my fever less.  
I stretched my hand—the curtain drew aside.  
The room was dark that daylight should not press  
Upon the slumber that had stayed the tide  
Of ebbing life. On one that sat alone  
A faint light fell—on one that sat and sighed :  
Her face I had beheld amidst the cone  
Of love and worship ! Faint and sad and wan,  
The light was there, even the light that shone  
From the far coming of the Son of Man

## XVII.

I walk about among my fellow-men,  
Alive, not dreaming—nor yet as I went,  
Ere I had seen this vision ; not as then,  
With thoughts of proud reproof, high discontent :  
In every eye I see a deeper eye ;  
In every face I see another blent ;  
On every brow, the countenance's sky,  
I see a coming dawn ; each face a heaven  
That waiteth—for its sun comes by and by.  
In care, in grief, in pride, in hardness, even  
In wrong and cruelty, I spy some trace  
Of that fair light which once to men was given  
When on the world arose the Human Face.  
His second coming I expect in these,  
My brothers, sisters, of our childhood's race.  
And though the night be long on polar seas,  
The sun is climbing up his slanting hill,  
Whether the waiting billows flash or freeze ;  
Whether the heavy sleep hold dreamers still,  
Or from their couch the light-stung labourers start ;

Whether the ripening sheaves with harvest fill,  
Or the green blades the cleaving earth-clods part.

## XVIII.

Lord, I have spoken in a parable,  
Wherein my slow speech says thy name alone  
Is the deep secret lying in Truth's well.  
Thy voice we seek in music's every tone ;  
Thy face in every glory of the earth ;  
Thy hand in every law ; in every moan,  
Thy cure, thy love, O woman-born, whose birth  
Laden with duty made thee strong to be  
Our human God. Therefore with holy mirth  
Forth in thy world I go, elate and free ;  
For though the vision tarry—at length the face  
Of Him who went about in Galilee  
Shall rise one morning full of truth and grace.

## THE SANGREAL.

(A part of the Story omitted in the old Romances.)

### I.

*How Sir Galahad despaired of finding the Grail.*

THROUGH the wood the sunny day  
Glimmered sweetly glad ;  
Through the wood his weary way  
Rode Sir Galahad.

Every side stood open porch,  
Stretched long cloister dim ;  
'Twas a wavering wandering church,  
Every side of him.

What if this should be the one  
Holiest church of all,  
Where through ages dim and lone  
Lies the Sangreal !

On through columns arching high,  
Foliage-vaulted, he,  
Rode in thirst that made him sigh,  
Like a misery.

Came the moon, through ghostly trees  
Glimmering faintly glad ;  
Worn and withered, ill at ease,  
Down lay Galahad ;

Closed his eyes, and took no heed  
What might come to pass ;  
Heard his hunger-busy steed  
Cropping juicy grass.

Sweet to him the cooling blade,  
Sweet the cold moonshine ;  
For his labour he was paid—  
Galahad must pine.

---

Prayer itself was almost dead.  
Joys he might have had  
Gathering mournful in his head  
Made his heart more sad.

With the lowliest in the land,  
He a maiden fair  
Might have led with virgin hand  
To the altar-stair.

Youth and strength away would glide,  
Age bring frost and snow :  
With no woman by his side,  
Downward he must go.

Once at Arthur's stately board,  
Arthur strong and wise,  
He had drunk with stalwart lord,  
Gazed in ladies' eyes.

Now, alas ! he wandered wide,  
Resting never more,  
Over lake, and mountain-side,  
Over sea and shore.



Gone was life and all its good,  
Gone without avail ;  
All his labour never would  
Find the Holy Grail.

## II.

*How Sir Galahad found and lost the Grail.*

Galahad was in the night  
When man's hope is dumb ;  
Galahad was in the night  
When God's wonders come.

Wings he heard not floating by,  
Heard not voices call ;  
But he started with a cry—  
Saw the Sangreal !

Three feet off upon the moss,  
As if cast away,  
Homely wood, with carven cross,  
Mossy, rough, it lay.

---

Ages hidden from the sun  
Moon and stars and all—  
Lo ! from realms of darkness won—  
Lo, the Sangreal !

To his knees, with fluttering soul,  
Rose the reverent knight ;  
Trembling, daring, to the bowl  
Went his hand of might.

In a well his hot hand sinks  
Full of water dim ;  
All its green moss floats and drinks,  
From the flooded brim.

Water plenty, but no cup !  
Down he lay and quaffed ;  
Straightway to his feet rose up,  
Rose and gaily laughed ;

Fell upon his knees to thank,  
Fell and worshipped there :  
To his heart the water sank,  
And awoke the prayer.

Down he lay and slept a sleep,  
Healthful as a death ;  
Like the sun from ocean deep,  
Rose at morning's breath.

Called his steed and drew the girth,  
Braced his loosened mail :  
" Come, we'll find," he said with mirth,  
" Now the Holy Grail."

## III.

*How Sir Galahad gave up the quest for the Grail.*

As the sun came quivering  
On the little well,  
Galahad from earth did spring,  
Sat full firm in selle ;

Merry songs began to sing,  
Let his matins bide,  
Rode a good hour pondering,  
And was turned aside.

“ Now,” said Galahad, “ no more  
    Seek I dim chapelle ;  
But in every forest hoar,  
    Seek its hidden well.

“ Not my thirst alone it stilled,  
    But my soul it stayed ;  
And my heart with gladness filled,  
    Wept and laughed and prayed.

“ Hence let every fountain, whose  
    Waters never fail,  
Be to me the cup I choose  
    For a Holy Grail !”

## IV.

*How Sir Galahad sought yet again for the Grail.*

On he went, to succour bound,  
    Through the forests dim.  
Many living wells he found,  
    None to succour him.

Never more the throb of prayer  
Followed on the draught ;  
Never more from drinking there,  
Up he rose and laughed.

Common water, all they bore,  
Rose and filled and flowed ;  
Quenched his thirst, but nevermore  
Eased his bosom's load.

For he sought no more the *Best*,  
And he found it not ;  
Lofty longing laid to rest,  
*Good* was all he got.

Yearned the thirst in all his mind,  
Like a stifled wail :  
" Nought will ease me till I find  
Yet the Holy Grail."

## V.

*How Sir Galahad found the Grail.*

Galahad went on again,  
Thorough wood and wave ;  
Sought in every mossy glen,  
Every mountain-cave ;  
  
Sought until the evening red  
Sunk in shadow deep ;  
Sought until the moon was dead ;  
Slept, and sought in sleep.  
  
Where he wandered, weary, sad,  
Story does not say ;  
But at last Sir Galahad  
Found it on a day ;  
  
Took the Grail into his hand,  
Had the cup of joy ;  
Carried it about the land,  
Gladsome as a boy ;

Laid his sword where he had found  
  Boot for every bale ;  
Stuck his spear into the ground—  
  Kept the Holy Grail.

## VI.

*How Sir Galahad carried about the Grail.*

Helm and horse and splendour gone,  
  Gone his shield and mail,  
Singing went he on and on,  
  For he had the Grail.

Woods he wandered with his staff,  
  Woods no longer sad :  
Earth and sky and sea did laugh  
  Round Sir Galahad.

Without place to lay his head,  
  Singing on he went,  
Every cave a palace-bed,  
  Every rock a tent.

---

Every fruit-tree yielding fruit  
Was a festival ;  
Every fountain at its foot  
Was a Sangreal.

Met he maidens in the vale,  
Youths on mountains hoar,  
Them he taught the Holy Grail  
Might be found once more.

Where he went, the smiles came forth,  
Where he left, the tears.  
Thus he wandered south and north,  
East and west, for years.

Spur nor charger needed he,  
Sword nor shield nor mail :  
Not a foe was left to flee  
From the Holy Grail.



## VII.

*How Sir Galahad hid the Grail.*

When he died, with reverent care  
Opened they his vest,  
Seeking for the cup he bare  
Hidden in his breast.

Nothing found they to their will—  
Nothing found at all :  
In his bosom, deeper still,  
Lay the Sangreal.

### THE FAILING TRACK.

WHERE went the feet that hitherto have come ?  
Here yawns no gulf to quench the flowing Past.  
Slowly and gently, as a song grows dumb,  
The grass floats in : the gazer stands aghast.

Tremble not, maiden. Let the footprints die.  
The skylark's way vanishes with his notes ;  
The mighty-throated, when he mounts on high,  
Far o'er some lowly landmark sings and floats.

Be of good cheer. Paths vanish from the wave  
Where thousand ships have torn a track of gray,  
And yet new ships go on, quiet and brave :  
A changeless heart of iron tells the way.

Nor heart of magnet, nor the eye of lark,  
To guide thy footsteps where old footprints fail?  
Ah! then, 'twere well to turn before the dark:  
Thy childhood's dreams lie not in yonder vale.

The backward path alone is plain to see;  
Thy foot hath worn it, weary ways behind;  
Back to the prayer beside thy mother's knee;  
Back to the question and the childlike mind.

Then start afresh—but toward a noble end,  
Some goal o'er which there hangs a star at night.  
So shall thou need no footprints to befriend;  
True heart and shining star will guide thee right.

### TELL ME.

“**T**RAVELLER, what lies over the hill?  
Traveller, tell to me :  
I am only a child—from the window-sill  
Over I cannot see.”

“Child, there’s a valley over there,  
Pretty and wooded and shy ;  
And a little brook that says—‘Take care,  
Or I’ll drown you by and by.’”

“And what comes next?”—“A little town ;  
And a towering hill again ;  
More hills and valleys, up and down,  
And a river now and then.”

“And what comes next?”—“A lonely moor,  
Without a beaten way;  
And gray clouds sailing slow before  
A wind that will not stay.”

“And then?”—“Dark rocks and yellow sand,  
And a moaning sea beside.”

“And then?”—“More sea, more sea, more land,  
And rivers deep and wide.”

“And then?”—“Oh! rock and mountain and vale,  
Rivers and fields and men,  
Over and over—a weary tale—  
And round to your home again.”

“And is that all? Have you told the best?”—  
“No, neither the best nor the end.  
On summer eves, away in the west,  
You will see a stair ascend,

“Built of all colours of lovely stones—  
A stair up into the sky,  
Where no one is weary, and no one moans,  
Or wants to be laid by.”

“ I will go.”—“ But the steps are very steep :  
If you would climb up there,  
You must lie at the foot, as still as sleep,  
A very step of the stair.

“ Feet of others on you will stand,  
To reach the stones high-piled.  
But One will stoop and take your hand,  
And say—‘ Come up, my child.’ ”

BROTHER ARTIST !

**B**ROTHER Artist ! help me, come !  
Artists are a maimed band :  
I have words, but not a hand :  
Thou hast hands though thou art dumb.

Had I hands, when words did fail—  
Vassal-words their hurrying chief—  
On the margin of my leaf  
Wondrous lines should tell the tale.

Had I hands and talking ears,  
I would set the air on fire ;  
Flames of music should aspire,  
Waking men with hopes and fears.

---

I have neither—help me, pray ;  
Bring thy brush and indian ink ;  
As I bid thee, do thou think ;  
Through thy heart give mine a way.

Draw me, on a grassy plain,  
With the rocky mountains nigh,  
Under a clear morning sky,  
Telling of a night of rain—

Huge and rugged, like a block  
Chosen for sarcophagus  
To a Pharaoh glorious—  
One gray solitary rock.

Cleave it down along the ridge  
With a fissure wide and deep,  
Splitting all the granite heap  
As by force of riving wedge.

Through the cleft let hands appear,  
Upward-pointed, close-pressed palms,  
As if worshipping in psalms,  
Mellowed by an ancient fear.



Turn thee, now—'tis almost done—  
To the near horizon's verge ;  
Make the smallest arc emerge  
Of the forehead of the sun.

Let the first ray linger down  
On a head all lowly bent,  
Just enough above the rent  
To receive the glory-crown.

Thanks, dear Painter. That is all.  
If thy picture one day should  
Need some words to make it good—  
I am ready at thy call.

## SIR LARK AND KING SUN.

“GOOD morrow, my lord!” in the sky alone,  
Sang the lark as the sun ascended his throne.

“Shine on me, my lord ; I only am come,  
Of all your servants, to welcome you home.  
I have flown right up, a whole hour, I swear,  
To catch the first shine of your golden hair.”

“Must I thank you then,” said the king, “Sir Lark,  
For flying so high and hating the dark ?  
You ask a full cup for half a thirst :  
Half was love of me, and half love to be first.  
There’s many a bird makes no such haste,  
But waits till I come : that’s as much to my taste.”

And King Sun hid his head in a turban of cloud,  
And Sir Lark stopped singing, quite vexed and  
cowed;

But he flew up higher, and thought, "Anon  
The wrath of the king will be over and gone;  
And his crown, shining out of its cloudy fold,  
Will change my brown feathers to a glory of gold."

So he flew—with the strength of a lark he flew;  
But, as he rose, the cloud rose too;  
And not one gleam of the golden hair  
Came through the depth of the misty air;  
Till, weary with flying, with sighing sore,  
The strong sun-seeker could do no more.

His wings had had no chrism of gold;  
And his feathers felt withered and worn and old;  
He faltered, and sank, and dropped like a stone.  
And there on his nest, where he left her, alone  
Sat his little wife on her little eggs,  
Keeping them warm with wings and legs.

Did I say alone? Ah, no such thing!  
Full in her face was shining the king.

"Welcome, Sir Lark ! You look tired," said he.

"*Up* is not always the best way to me.

While you have been singing so high and away,

I've been shining to your little wife all day."

He had set his crown all about the nest,

And out of the midst shone her little brown breast ;

And so glorious was she in russet gold,

That for wonder and awe Sir Lark grew cold.

He popped his head under her wing, and lay

As still as a stone, till King Sun was away.

## THE OWL AND THE BELL.

“*BING, Bim, Bang, Bome!*”

Sang the Bell to himself in his house at home,  
Up in the tower, away and unseen,  
In a twilight of ivy, cool and green ;  
With his *Bing, Bim, Bang, Bome!*  
Singing bass to himself in his house at home.

Said the Owl to himself, as he sat below  
On a window-ledge, like a ball of snow,  
“Pest on that fellow, sitting up there,  
Always calling the people to prayer !  
With his *Bing, Bim, Bang, Bome!*  
Mighty big in his house at home !

---

“I will move,” said the Owl. “But it suits me well;  
And one may get used to it, who can tell?”  
So he slept in the day with all his might,  
And rose and flapped out in the hush of night,  
When the Bell was asleep in his tower at home,  
Dreaming over his *Bing, Bang, Bome!*

For the Owl was born so poor and genteel,  
He was forced from the first to pick and steal;  
He scorned to work for honest bread—  
“Better have never been hatched!” he said.  
So he slept all day; for he dared not roam  
Till night had silenced the *Bing, Bang, Bome!*

When his six little darlings had chipped the egg,  
He must steal the more: 'twas a shame to beg.  
And they ate the more that they did not sleep well:  
“It’s their gizzards,” said *Ma*; said *Pa*, “It’s the Bell!  
For they quiver like leaves in a wind-blown tome,  
When the Bell bellows out his *Bing, Bang, Bome!*”

But the Bell began to throb with the fear  
Of bringing the house about his one ear;

And his people were patching all day long,  
And propping the walls to make them strong.  
So a fortnight he sat, and felt like a mome,  
For he dared not shout his *Bing, Bang, Bome!*

Said the Owl to himself, and hissed as he said,  
"I do believe the old fool is dead.  
Now—now, I vow, I shall never pounce twice;  
And stealing shall be all sugar and spice.  
But I'll see the corpse, ere he's laid in the loam,  
And shout in his ear *Bing, Bim, Bang, Bome!*—

"Hoo! hoo!" he cried, as he entered the steeple,  
"They've hanged him at last, the righteous people!  
His swollen tongue lolls out of his head—  
Hoo! hoo! at last the old brute is dead.  
There let him hang, the shapeless gnome!  
Choked, with his throat full of *Bing, Bang, Bome!*"

So he danced about him, singing *Too-who!*  
And flapped the poor Bell, and said, "Is that you?  
Where is your voice with its wonderful tone,  
Banging poor owls, and making them groan?"

---

A fig for you now, in your great hall-dome !  
*Too-who* is better than *Bing, Bang, Bome!*"

So brave was the Owl, the downy and dapper,  
That he flew inside, and sat on the clapper ;  
And he shouted *Too-who* ! till the echo awoke,  
Like the sound of a ghostly clapper-stroke :  
"Ah, ha !" quoth the Owl, "I am quite at home—  
I will take your place with my *Bing, Bang, Bome!*"

The Owl was uplifted with pride and self-wonder ;  
He hissed, and then called the echo thunder ;  
And he sat the monarch of feathered fowl  
Till—*Bang!* went the Bell—and down went the Owl,  
Like an avalanche of feathers and foam,  
Loosed by the booming *Bing, Bang, Bome!*

He sat where he fell, as if nought was the matter,  
Though one of his eyebrows was certainly flatter.  
Said the eldest owlet, "Pa, you were wrong ;  
He's at it again with his vulgar song."  
"Be still," said the Owl ; "you're guilty of pride :  
I brought him to life by perching inside."



“But why, my dear?” said his pillowy wife;  
“You know he was always the plague of your life.”  
“I have given him a lesson of good for evil;  
Perhaps the old ruffian will now be civil.”  
The Owl looked righteous, and raised his comb;  
But the Bell bawled on his *Bing, Bang, Bome!*

ROADSIDE POEMS



HE HEEDED NOT.

THE tongues of whispering trees to hear,  
The sermon of the silent stone,  
To read in brooks the lessons clear  
Of Nature working all alone—  
That man hath neither eye nor ear  
Who careth not for human moan ;

Who takes the city for a waste  
With his refined poetic eye ;  
The weak antennæ of whose taste  
From touch of alien grossness fly ;  
Who draws himself, in shrinking haste,  
From sin that passeth helpless by.

But he whose heart is full of grace  
To brothers, sisters, round about,

Finds more in any human face,  
    Beclouded all with wrong and doubt,  
Than shines in Nature's holiest place,  
    Where mountains dwell and streams run out.

A noise of strife assailed my ear,  
    As through the streets I went one morn ;  
A wretched alley I drew near,  
    Whence plainer still the sound was borne—  
Growls breaking into curses clear,  
    Retorted with a shriller scorn.

And round a corner straightway came  
    A man consumed in smouldering ire ;  
Scarce fit to answer to his name,  
    His senses drowned with revels dire,  
Flashes of sullen fitful flame  
    Broke from the embers of his fire.

He cast a glance of stupid hate  
    Behind him, every step he took,  
Where followed him, like following fate,  
    An aged crone, whose bloated look  
Outdid her son's. With feeble gait,  
    She followed, rating him, and shook.

---

But why should I discordful things  
Weave into cadence ordered right?  
That, answering them, yet higher strings  
May sound in praise of love's own might;  
Obedient to the law that brings  
From evil good, from darkness light.

The man was barred, checked in his haste,  
By love that bred him some annoy:  
In front, no higher than his waist,  
Against him leaned a tiny boy—  
A feeble child, ill-clothed, pale-faced,  
Whose eyes held neither hope nor joy,

But earnestness. You think he pled  
With drunken sire to keep the peace,  
And home his wayward footsteps led,  
To find in sleep his sin's release?  
The child in evil born and bred,  
Strove thus to make the evil cease?

Not so. The boy spoke never word;  
But, seeming only to aspire,  
Like a half-fledged, worm-hungry bird,  
He stood on tiptoe, reaching higher:

With anxious care his soul was stirred,  
With anxious service to his sire.

With waking pale, with anger red,  
He, forward leaning, held his foot,  
Lest on the darling he should tread :  
A misty sense had taken root  
In his poor sin-bewildered head,  
That round him kindness hovered mute.

And o'er the child his words of ill  
Were gently, dumbly, powerless borne ;  
They hurt him not : the fleet bee will  
The falling hail, uninjured, scorn.  
He heeded not, but, reaching still,  
Buttoned his father's waistcoat worn.

Over his calm, unconscious face,  
There passed no troublous change of mood ;  
It kept its quiet earnest grace,  
As round it all things had been good ;  
Clear as a pool in its own place,  
Unsunned within a sunless wood.

---

Was the child deaf?—the tender palm  
Of him that made him, folded round  
The little head, to keep it calm  
And fearless ; so that every sound  
Grew nothing there ; nor curse nor psalm  
Could thrill the globe thus grandly bound ?

Or was it that, by nature's law,  
Accustomed words themselves efface ?  
Or was he too intent for awe,  
Love filling up the thinking place ?  
I cannot tell ; I only saw  
An earnest, an untroubled grace.

From evil men whose tongues are swords,  
Who speak and have not understood,  
Lord, keep us. From the strife of words  
Fold up our hearts in something good.  
Make silence with the hand that girds  
The silent mountain, silent wood.



### THE SHEEP AND THE GOAT.

NOT all the streets that London builds  
Can hide the sky and sun,  
Shut out the winds from o'er the fields,  
Or quench the scent the hay-swath yields  
All night, when work is done.

And here and there an open spot  
Lies bare to light and dark,  
Where grass receives the wanderer hot,  
Where trees are growing, houses not ;—  
One is the Regent's Park.

Soft creatures, with ungentle guides,  
God's sheep from hill and plain,  
Are gathered here in living tides,  
Lie wearily on woolly sides,  
Or crop the grass amain.

And from the lane and court and den,  
In ragged skirts and coats,  
Come hither tiny sons of men,  
Wild things, untaught of book or pen,  
The little human goats.

One hot and cloudless summer day,  
An overdriven sheep  
Had come a long and dusty way :  
Throbbing with thirst the creature lay—  
A panting woollen heap.

But help is nearer than we know  
For ills of every name :  
Ragged enough to scare the crow,  
But with a heart to pity woe,  
A quick-eyed urchin came.

Little knew he of field or fold ;  
Yet knew enough : his cap  
Was just the cup for water cold—  
He knew what it could do of old ;  
Its rents were few, good-hap !

Shaping the brim and crown he went,  
Till crown from brim was deep.  
The water ran from brim and rent ;  
Before he came the half was spent—  
The half, it saved the sheep.

O little goat, born, bred in ill,  
Unwashed, ill-fed, unshorn !  
Thou meet'st the sheep from breezy hill,  
Apostle of thy Saviour's will  
In London wastes forlorn.

And let priests say the thing they please,  
My faith, though very dim,  
Thinks he will say who always sees,  
In doing it to one of these,  
Thou didst it unto him.

## THE SHADOWS.

MY little boy, with round fair cheeks,  
And dreamy, large, brown eyes,  
Not often, little wisehead, speaks,  
But will make some replies.

His sister, always glad to show  
Her knowledge, for its praise,  
Said yesterday : " God's here, you know ;  
He's everywhere, always.

" He's in this room." His large brown eyes  
Went wandering round for God.  
In vain he looks, in vain he tries,  
His wits are all abroad.

“He is not here, mamma? No, no ;  
I do not see him at all.  
He’s not the shadows, is he?” So  
His doubtful accents fall—

Fall on my heart, like precious seed,  
Grow up to flowers of love ;  
For as a child, in ignorant need,  
Am I to Him above.

And ere the morn began to break,  
Ere day began to be,  
In my dim room I too did take  
The shadows, Lord, for thee.

But now I know each shadow there,  
Slow remnant of the night,  
Is but an aching longing prayer  
For thee, O Lord, the Light.

AN OLD SERMON WITH A NEW TEXT.

MY wife contrived a fleecy thing  
Her husband to infold,  
For 'tis the pride of woman true,  
To cover from the cold :  
My daughter made it a new text  
For a sermon very old.

The child came trotting to her side,  
Ready with bootless aid.  
“Lily will make one for papa,”  
The tiny woman said.  
Her mother gave the needful things,  
And a knot upon the thread.

“The knot, mamma ! It won't come through,  
Mamma ! mamma !” she cried.

Her mother cut away the knot,  
And she was satisfied,  
Pulling the long thread through and through  
In fabricating pride.

Her mother told me this. It gave  
A glimpse of something more :  
Great meanings often hide themselves  
With little words before ;  
And I brooded over this new text,  
Till the seed a sermon bore.

Nannie, to you I preach it now—  
A little sermon, low :  
Is it not thus a thousand times,  
As through the world we go ?  
Do we not pull, and fret, and say,  
Instead of "Yes, Lord," "No" ?

Yet all the rough things that we meet,  
Which will not move a jot—  
The hindrances to heart and feet—  
*The Crook in every Lot—*  
What mean they, but that every thread  
Has at the end a knot ?

For *circumstance* is God's great web—  
He gives it free of cost ;  
But men must help to make it clothes  
To shield their hearts from frost :  
Shall we, because the thread holds fast,  
Think all our labour lost ?

If he should cut away the knot,  
And yield each fancy wild,  
The hidden life within our hearts—  
His life, the undefiled—  
Would fare as ill as I should fare  
From the needle of my child.

For as the cordage to the sail,  
As to my verse the rhyme,  
As mountains to the low green earth,  
So fair, so hard to climb,  
As call of striking clock, amid  
The quiet flow of time,

As blows from sculptor's mallet on  
The marble's dawning face,



Such are God's *Yea* and *Nay* unto  
The spirit's growing grace ;  
So work his making hands with what  
Does and does not take place.

We know no more the things we need  
Than child to choose his food ;  
We know not what we shall be yet,  
So we know not present good ;  
For God's ideal who but God  
Hath ever understood !

This is my sermon. It is preached  
Against all useless strife.  
Strive not with anything that is—  
To cut it with thy knife.  
Ah ! be not angry with the knot  
That holdeth fast thy life.

## THE WAKEFUL SLEEPER.

WHEN things are holding wonted pace  
In wonted paths, without a trace  
Or hint of neighbouring wonder ;  
Sometimes, from other realms a tone,  
A thought, a vision, swift, alone,  
Breaks common life asunder.

So it fell out one music night,  
Where men and women, cheerful, bright,  
Wafted away their leisure ;  
For midst the city's noisy care,  
The silent ear will claim its share  
Of self-consuming pleasure.

They listen, listen, all around,  
As, gush on gush, the bubbling sound

Breaks now like spring o'erflowing,  
Now ebbing wavers—on its streams  
Floating its waifs of rainbow dreams,  
Still coming and still going.

When—silent as a tone itself  
Before the finger frees the elf  
Bee-like, with honey laden—  
The door comes open, just ajar—  
A little further—just as far  
As shows a tiny maiden.

Softly she comes, her wee pink toes  
Daintily peeping, as she goes,  
Her long nightgown from under.  
With countless change of mien and look,  
All gazed. She glided through, nor took  
Least notice of their wonder.

They made a path and she went through :  
She had her little stool in view,  
Close by the chimney-corner.  
She turned—sat down before them all,  
Stately as princess at a ball,  
And silent as a mourner.

---

But when she turned her face anew,  
They saw what had escaped their view,  
    As past them she came creeping :  
'Twas this—that though the child could walk,  
And on her sweet lips hovered talk,  
    Not less the child was sleeping.

Play on, the mother whispered, play ;  
When she has enough, she'll go away.  
    They played and she sat listening.  
Over her face the melody  
Floated like low winds o'er the sea ;  
    Her cheeks like eyes were glistening.

Her clasped hands her bent knees hold.  
Like long grass drooping on the wold,  
    Her sightless head is sleeping.  
She sits all ears, drinking her fill,  
Beneath her long white garment still  
    Her rosy toes outpeeping.

Ah ! little maiden, listen so.  
Who knows what into thee will go—

What strength for future sorrow?  
What hope to help thee in the day  
When earnest creeps into thy play—  
For thou wilt wake one morrow?

But little as thou then wilt know  
Whence comes the joy that meets the woe—  
Of what thou art partaker;  
As little know we what, when sleep  
Is bathing us in stillness deep,  
Comes to us from the Maker.

Wake, or sleep on, and sleeping go.  
If thou shouldst wake, thou wouldst but know  
What sets thy heart a glowing;  
But we, when we awake at last,  
Shall hear old songs we mourned as past,  
Find past in present flowing.

A DREAM OF WAKING.

A CHILD was born of sin and shame,  
Wronged by his very birth,  
Without a home, without a name,  
A stranger in the earth.

A servant's child, all undesired,  
Ungreeted he appears ;  
His cry no wife's proud joy inspired,  
Allayed no husband's fears.

Heaven's beggar, all but turned adrift  
For knocking at earth's gate,  
His mother from the unsought gift  
Recoiled almost with hate.

And now the mistress on her knee  
The unloved baby bore,  
The while the servant sullenly  
Prepared to leave her door.

Her eggs are dear to mother-dove,  
Her chickens to the hen ;  
All young ones bring with them their love,  
Of sheep, or goats, or men :

Shall this one child from heaven have come  
For love in vain to seek ?  
Let mother's hardened heart be dumb,  
A sister-babe will speak.

God's child shall not have only shame ;  
Sooner the stones shall rise :  
Asserter of Love's mighty claim,  
The mistress' daughter cries :

" Mamma keep baby, keep him so.  
Don't let him go away."  
" But, darling, if his mother go,  
The baby cannot stay."

"The baby's crying—hear him cry !

He's thirsty, I *do* think.

I cannot bear it. Let me try

If I can make him drink.

"O baby ! baby ! Mamma, *do*

Let the poor baby stay.

"He'll cry all day to come to you ;

Don't let him go away,

"For Jane will hurt him. Mamma *will*

Let the poor baby stay?"

The mother's heart grew sore ; but still

Baby must go away.

The red lip trembled ; the slow tears

Came darkening in her eyes—

Dim agony of griefs and fears

That had no voice for cries.

At length as if on Chebar's tide,

The dawn began to break ;

Child-prophetess, aloud she cried :

"Mamma ! when *shall* we wake?"



O happy ignorance, to think  
That grief can only seem !—  
When torture swells above the brink,  
It can be but a dream !

Nay—happy wisdom ! Darling, keep  
Such ignorance all thy life ;  
For we *are* dreaming, fast asleep,  
This dream of ache and strife.

But when above God's eastern hill,  
His morn our dream shall quell,  
With waking tears our eyes will fill,  
To know that all is well.

Lord of our dreams ! rule thou the night ;  
Hold fast our sleeping soul :  
Thou sittest in the high daylight—  
Around us shadows roll.

One day in thy light, light we see,  
But now in dreams we quake,  
And lift the child's cry unto thee—  
“ Father ! when *shall* we wake ? ”

ORGAN SONGS.



A MEDITATION OF ST. ELIGIUS.

*M*ARY for water Jesus sent,  
From where by Joseph's bench he stood.  
With pitcher in his hand he went,  
And drew the water very good.

Then home upon his head he bore  
The pitcher, to the brim upfilled;  
But ere he reached the cottage-door,  
The pitcher broke, the water spilled.

His cloak upon the ground he laid,  
And in it gathered up the pool;  
Obedient there the water stayed,  
And home he bore it sweet and cool.

Eligius said : " It is not good :

The hands that all the world control,  
Had there been room for wonders, would  
Have made his mother's pitcher whole.

" But even an ancient fable, told

In love of thee, the Truth indeed,  
Like broken pitcher, yet may hold  
Some water for a loving need.

" Thy living water I have spilt.

I thought to bear the pitcher high ;  
I stumbled on the stones of guilt,  
And there the scattered potsherds lie !

" Christ, gather up my life's poor hoard—

It sinks and sobs into the ground ;  
Bear in thy woven garments, Lord,  
The water in thy well I found.

" Brother, to help thy brothers come,

Leave me not lost in bootless care :  
What will they do I left at home,  
When I can neither draw nor bear ?

“What will He say whose love will drink  
Of any cup that love hath filled,  
If I sit here on Sychar's brink,  
My pitcher broke, thy water spilled?

“Lift, Lord, and bear my life, thy gift,  
Too easy to be lost for me;  
And I the cross will try to lift  
And bear all-humbly after thee.”

HYMN FOR A SICK GIRL.

FATHER, in the dark I lay,  
Nor my soul had light ;  
Helpless, but for hope alway  
In thy father-might.

Now 'tis morn. I see the sun,  
And I live again.  
All the darkness now is gone ;  
Gone is all my pain.

So to life one morn I start,  
Fresh, and strong, and brave ;  
All the sad death-fearing part  
Ready for the grave.

For this form shall one day lie  
Underneath the ground ;  
But awake, not sleeping, I.  
Shall in him be found.

But some shadows yet within  
This glad soul of mine,  
Tell me yet that death and sin  
Strive with life divine.

Father, help thy little child ;  
Be thou strong for me ;  
Till the sinful undefiled  
Shall arise in thee.



A CHRISTMAS CAROL FOR 1862,

THE YEAR OF THE TROUBLE IN LANCASHIRE.

THE skies are pale, the trees are stiff,  
• The earth is dull and old ;  
The frost is glittering as if  
The very sun were cold.  
And hunger fell is joined with frost,  
To make men thin and wan :  
Come, babe, from heaven, or we are lost ;  
Be born, O child of man.

The children cry, the women shake,  
The strong men stare about ;  
They sleep when they would keep awake,  
They wake ere night is out.

For they have lost their heritage—

No sweat is on their brow :

Come, babe, and bring them work and wage ;

Be born, and save us now.

Across the sea, beyond our sight,

Roars on the fierce debate ;

The men go down in bloody fight,

The women weep and hate.

And in the right be which that may,

Surely the strife is long :

Come, son of man, thy righteous way,

And right will have no wrong.

Good men speak lies against thine own—

Tongue quick, and hearing slow ;

They will not let thee walk alone,

And think to serve thee so :

If they the children's freedom saw,

In thee, the children's king,

They would be still with holy awe,

Or only speak to sing.

Some neither lie nor starve nor fight,  
Nor yet the poor deny ;  
But in their hearts all is not right,—  
They often sit and sigh.  
We need thee every day and hour,  
In sunshine and in snow :  
Child king, we pray with all our power—  
Be born, and save us so.

We are but men and women, Lord ;  
Thou art a gracious child ;  
O fill our hearts, and heap our board,  
Of grace, this winter wild.  
And though the trees be sad and bare,  
Hunger and hate about,  
Come, child, and ill deeds and ill fare  
Will soon be driven out.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

BABE Jesus lay on Mary's lap ;  
The sun shone in his hair ;  
And this was how she saw, mayhap,  
The crown already there.

For she sang : " Sleep on, my little king !  
Bad Herod dares not come ;  
Before thee sleeping, holy thing,  
The wild winds would be dumb.

" I kiss thy hands, I kiss thy feet,  
My king, so long desired ;  
Thy hands shall never be soiled, my sweet,  
Thy feet shall never be tired.

“For thou art the king of men, my son ;  
Thy crown I see it plain ;  
And men shall worship thee, every one,  
And cry, Glory ! Amen.”

Babe Jesus opened his eyes so wide !  
At Mary looked her Lord.  
And Mary stinted her song and sighed.  
Babe Jesus said never a word.

### THE SLEEPLESS JESUS.

‘TIS time to sleep, my little boy ;  
    Why gaze thy bright eyes so ?  
At night, earth’s children for new joy  
    Home to thy father go,  
But thou are wakeful. Sleep, my child ;  
    The moon and stars are gone ;  
The wind is up and raving wild ;  
    But thou art smiling on.

My child, thou hast immortal eyes  
    That see by their own light ;  
They see the children’s blood—it lies  
    Red-glowing through the night.

As if for refuge, to thine ear  
Cry after cry doth run ;  
Thou seemest not to see or hear,  
But only smilest on.

When first thou camest to the earth,  
All sounds of strife were still ;  
A silence lay about thy birth,  
And thou didst sleep thy fill.  
Thou wakest now, and weepest not !  
Thy earth is woe-begone ;  
Both babes and mothers wail their lot,  
But still thou smilest on.

I read thine eyes like holy book ;  
No grief is pictured there ;  
Upon thy face I see the look  
Of one who answers prayer.  
Thine eyes they see, beyond this wild,  
The will of God well done ;  
Men's songs are in thine ears, my child,  
And so thou smilest on.

They say : " I will arise and go."

God says : " I will go meet."

Thou seest them gather, weeping low,  
About the Father's feet.

And for their brothers men must bear,  
Till all are homeward gone.

Answered, O eyes, ye see all prayer.  
Smile, Son of God, smile on.



### THE CHILDREN'S HEAVEN.

THE infant lies in blessed ease  
    Upon his mother's breast ;  
No storm, no dark, the baby sees  
    Grow in his heaven of rest.  
His moon and stars, his mother's eyes ;  
    His air his mother's breath ;  
His earth her lap—and there he lies,  
    Fearless of growth and death.

And yet the winds that wander there  
    Are full of sighs and fears ;  
The dew slow falling through that air—  
    It is the dew of tears.

Her smile would win no smile again,  
If baby saw the things  
That rise and ache across her brain,  
The while she sweetly sings.

Alas ! my child, thy heavenly home  
Hath sorrows not a few ;  
Lo ! clouds and vapours build its dome,  
Instead of starry blue.  
Thy faith in us is faith in vain—  
We are not what we seem.  
O dreary day, O cruel pain,  
That wakes thee from thy dream !

Dream on, my babe, and have no care ;  
Half-knowledge brings the grief :  
Thou art as safe as if we were  
As good as thy belief.  
There is a better heaven than this  
Whereon thou gazest now ;  
A truer love than in that kiss ;  
A peace beyond that brow.

We all are babes upon his breast  
Who is our Father dear ;  
No storm invades that heaven of rest,  
No dark, no doubt, no fear.  
Its mists are clouds of stars, inwove  
In motions without strife ;  
Its winds, the goings of his love ;  
Its dew, the dew of life.

We lift our hearts unto Thy heart,  
Our eyes unto thine eye,  
In whose great light the clouds depart  
From off our children's sky.  
Thou lovest—and our babes are blest,  
Poor though our love may be ;  
Thou in thyself art all at rest,  
And we and they in thee.

## REJOICE.

“REJOICE,” said the Sun; “I will make thee gay  
With glory and gladness and holiday ;  
I am dumb, O man, and I need thy voice.”  
But man would not rejoice.

“Rejoice in thyself,” said he, “O Sun,  
For thou thy daily course dost run.  
In thy lofty place, rejoice if thou can :  
For me, I am only a man.”

“Rejoice,” said the Wind ; “I am free and strong ;  
I will wake in thy heart an ancient song.  
In the bowing woods, hear my singing voice !”  
But man would not rejoice.

“Rejoice, O Wind, in thy strength,” said he,  
“For thou fulfillest thy destiny ;  
Shake the trees, and the faint flowers fan :  
For me, I am only a man.”

“I am here,” said the Night, “with moon and star ;  
The Sun and the Wind are gone afar ;  
I am here with rest and dreams of choice.”  
But man would not rejoice.

For he said—“What is rest to me, I pray,  
Whose labour brings no gladsome day ?  
He only should dream who has hope behind.  
Alas for me and my kind !”

Then a voice that came not from moon or star,  
From the sun, or the wind roving afar,  
Said, “Man, I am with thee—therefore rejoice.”  
And man said, “I rejoice.”

## THE GRACE OF GRACE.

HAD I the grace to win the grace  
Of ancient man in lore complete,  
My face would worship at his face,  
I sitting lowly at his feet.

Had I the grace to win the grace  
Of childhood, loving shy, apart,  
The child should find a nearer place,  
And teach me resting on my heart.

Had I the grace to win the grace  
Of maiden living all above,  
My soul would trample down the base,  
That she might have a man to love.

A grace I had no grace to win  
Knocks now at my half-open door :  
Ah ! Lord of glory, come thou in ;—  
Thy grace divine is all, and more !

ANTIPHONY.

DAYLIGHT fades away.  
Is the Lord at hand,  
In the shadows gray  
Stealing on the land?

Gently from the east  
Come the shadows gray ;  
But our lowly priest  
Nearer is than they.

It is darkness quite.  
Is the Lord at hand,  
In the cloak of night  
Stolen upon the land?



But I know not night,  
For my Lord is here ;  
With him dark is light,  
With him far is near.

List ! the cock's awake.  
Is the Lord at hand ?  
Cometh he to make  
Light in all the land ?

He hath come to make  
Morning in my heart ;  
Now I am awake ;  
Shadowy things depart.

Lo, the dawning hill !  
Is the Lord at hand,  
Come to scatter ill,  
Ruling in the land ?

He hath scattered ill,  
Ruling in my mind.  
Growing to his will,  
Freedom comes, I find.

We will watch all day,  
Lest the Lord should come ;  
All night waking stay,  
In the darkness dumb.

I will work all day,  
For the Lord hath come ;  
Down my head will lay,  
All night glad and dumb.

For we know not when  
Christ may be at hand ;  
But we know that then  
Joy is in the land.

For I know that where  
Christ hath come again,  
Quietness without care  
Dwelleth in his men.

## DORCAS.

ONE day a woman, gently bowed,  
As with his easy yoke,  
Stood on the borders of the crowd  
Listening as Jesus spoke.

She saw the garment knit throughout ;  
Forgot the words he spake ;  
Thought only " Happy hands that wrought  
The honoured robe to make ! "

Her eyes with longing tears grew dim :  
She never can come nigh  
To do one service poor for him  
For whom she glad would die.

Across the crowd, borne on the breeze,  
Comes—"Inasmuch as ye  
Did it unto the least of these,  
Ye did it unto me."

Home, home she went, and plied the loom,  
And God's dear poor arrayed.  
She died—they wept about the room,  
And showed the coats she made.

### MARRIAGE SONG.

“THEY have no more wine,” she said.  
But they had enough of bread ;  
And the vessels by the door  
Held for thirst a plenteous store :  
Yes, *enough* ; but Love divine  
Turned the water into wine.

When should wine not water flow,  
But when home the heart doth go ?  
When in holy bondage bound,  
Soul in soul hath freedom found ?  
Meetly then, a sacred sign,  
Turns the water into wine.

---

Good is all the feasting then ;  
Good the merry words of men ;  
Good the laughter and the smiles ;  
Good the wine that grief beguiles ;—  
Crowning good, the Word divine  
Turning water into wine.

May the Master with you dwell ;  
Daily work this miracle ;  
In the things that common grow  
Waken up the heavenly show ;  
Ever at your table dine,  
Turning water into wine.

Then at last you shall descry  
All the patterns of the sky :  
Earth a heaven of short abode ;  
Houses temples unto God ;  
Waterpots, to vision fine,  
Brimming full of heavenly wine.

BLIND BARTIMEUS.

AS Jesus went into Jericho town,  
'Twas darkness all from toe to crown,  
About blind Bartimeus.

He said, "Our eyes are more than dim,  
And so, of course, we don't see him,  
But David's son can see us.

"Cry out, cry out, blind brother—cry ;  
Let not salvation dear go by.

Have mercy, Son of David."  
Though they were blind, they both could hear—  
They heard, and cried, and he drew near ;  
And so the blind were saved.

---

O Jesus Christ, I am deaf and blind ;  
Nothing comes through into my mind ;

I only am not dumb :  
Although I see thee not, nor hear,  
I cry because thou may'st be near :  
O son of Mary, come.

I feel a finger on mine ear ;  
A voice comes through the deafness drear :  
“ Be opened, senses dim ! ”  
A hand is laid upon mine eyes ;  
I hear, and hearken, see, and rise—  
'Tis He : I follow him.



COME UNTO ME.

COME unto me, the Master says.  
But how? I am not good ;  
No thankful song my heart will raise,  
Nor even wish it could.

I am not sorry for the past,  
Nor able not to sin ;  
The weary strife would ever last  
If once I should begin.

Hast thou no burden then to bear?  
No action to repent?  
Is all around so very fair?  
Is thy heart quite content?

---

Hast thou no sickness in thy soul?

No labour to endure?

Then go in peace, for thou art whole;

Thou needest not his cure.

Ah! mock me not. Sometimes I sigh;

I have a nameless grief,

A faint sad pain—but such that I

Can look for no relief.

Come, come to him who made thy heart;

Come weary and oppressed;

To come to Jesus is thy part,

His part to give thee rest.

New grief, new hope he will bestow,

Thy grief and pain to quell;

Into thy heart himself will go,

And that will make thee well.

BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT :

*for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

OUR Father, hear our longing prayer,  
And help this prayer to flow,  
That humble thoughts, which are thy care,  
May live in us and grow.

For lowly hearts shall understand  
The peace, the calm delight  
Of dwelling in thy heavenly land,  
A pleasure in thy sight.

Give us humility, that so  
Thy reign may come within,  
And when thy children homeward go,  
We too may enter in.

Hear us, our Saviour : ours thou art,  
Though we are not like thee ;  
Give us thy spirit in our heart,  
Large, lowly, trusting, free.

BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN :

*for they shall be comforted.*

SPEAK to our hearts, O Father ! Say  
What we have been to thee ;  
How we have wandered far away,  
And hardly turned to see.

Then lifted hands will hide the face ;  
Then tears our grief will prove  
That such hath been the Father's grace,  
And such the children's love.

Then shall our spirits hold at once  
A comfort and a pain ;  
For we shall know thy wandering sons  
Are turning home again.

With such glad grief, such tearful joy,  
Be our repentance blest ;  
Thy comfort then, without alloy,  
Shall give us heavenly rest.

BLESSED ARE THE MEEK :

*for they shall inherit the earth.*

O SON of man—name of thy choice,  
Our brother-Lord, our life,  
The story says thy noble voice  
Was never heard in strife.

Loving always, asleep, awake,  
Talking, or drinking wine—  
Even uttering woe, thy love would make  
The sons of God divine.

Without a place to lay thy head,  
That head yet wore earth's crown ;  
At thy command diseases fled,  
The winds and waves lay down.

In all things like thy brethren made,  
Grant, king of kings, that we,  
In humble royalty arrayed,  
Possess the earth like thee.



BLESSED ARE THEY THAT HUNGER

*and thirst after righteousness : for they shall be filled.*

IF we were longing for the bread  
That cometh down from heaven ;  
If for the water that he said  
To thirsty souls is given .

Then boldly should we come to thee,  
And plead for that we want ;  
For in our souls desire would be  
An earnest of the grant.

But when thy sun shines from the skies,  
Earth smiles back to her lord :  
In upward looks our hopes arise,  
Responsive to thy word.

Our souls, dry empty vessels set  
Thy rain to hold and lend,  
Lie open to thy heaven, O let  
The righteousness descend.

BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL:

*for they shall obtain mercy.*

IT was an awful hour that gave  
Thee, Lord, the strength to win  
Unholy men up from the grave  
Of darkness and of sin.

And is this all thou dost require  
For thy forgiveness now—  
That we to loftier bliss aspire  
By doing even as thou?

Thou risest on our darksome earth,  
Radiant of human light,  
That men may see, recall their birth,  
And claim its lofty right ;

The right to pardon and to bless,  
By service high to rule ;  
Upheld with wealth of tenderness  
From God the pitiful.

BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART :

*for they shall see God.*

FATHER, our bosoms, dark and drear,  
Are in such evil case  
With hate, ambition, care, and fear,  
We cannot see thy face.

Cast out our Legion ; cleanse thy room,  
But not to leave it bare ;  
Let Christ into his temple come,  
And devils will not dare.

His light will cleanse the eyes to see,  
Open the ears to hear ;  
And so the house prepared for thee,  
Thy vision will draw near.

Thy glory shall free entrance win,  
When thou com'st to thy place :  
And full of holy eyes within  
We shall behold thy face

MORNING HYMN.

FATHER in heaven, I praise thy name  
    With sounding words of song ;  
With gladsome words aloud proclaim  
    That I to thee belong.

I see thy light, I feel thy wind ;  
    The world is all a sign ;  
Each thing that wakes my heart and mind  
    My life and hope, is thine.

The living soul which I call me  
    Doth love and seek and know ;  
It is an utterance of thee,  
    Hidden in whom I grow.

Therefore I choose my highest part,  
And turn my face to thee ;  
Therefore I stir my inmost heart  
To worship fervently.

Lord, let me live and act this day,  
Still rising from the dead ;  
Lord, make my spirit good and gay—  
Give me my daily bread.

Within my heart, speak, Lord, speak on,  
My heart alive to keep,  
Till the night comes, and, labour done,  
In thee I fall asleep.



## EVENING HYMN

O GOD, whose daylight leadeth down  
    Into the sunless way,  
Who with thy sweet repose dost crown  
    The labour of the day !

Take it, O Lord, and make it clean  
    With thy forgiveness dear ;  
That so the thing that might have been,  
    To-morrow may appear.

And when my thought is all astray,  
    Yet think thou on in me ;  
That with the new unsullied day  
    My soul wake fresh and free.

And when thou givest dreams to men,  
Give dreams, O Lord, to me ;  
That even in visions of the brain,  
I wander towards thee.

THE BEAUTY OF HOLINESS.

I LOVE thy skies and sunny mists,  
Thy fields, thy mountains hoar,  
Thy wind that bloweth where it lists—  
Thy will, I love it more.

I love thy hidden truth to seek  
All round, in sea, on shore ;  
The arts whereby like gods we speak—  
Thy will to me is more.

I love thy men and women, Lord,  
The children round thy door ;  
Calm thoughts that inward strength afford—  
Thy will, O Lord, is more.

But when thy will my life doth hold,  
Thine to the very core,  
The world, which that same will did mould,  
I shall love ten times more.



VIOLIN SONGS.



### THE THANKLESS LADY.

IT is May, and the moon leans down all night  
Over a blossomy land.  
By her window sits the lady white,  
With her chin upon her hand.

“O sing to me, dear nightingale,  
The song of a year ago ;  
I have had enough of longing and wail,  
Enough of heart-break and woe.

“O glimmer on me, my apple tree,  
Like the birthplace of the snow ;  
Let odour and moonlight and melody  
In one old harmony flow.”



The dull odour swims ; the cold blossoms gleam ;  
And the bird will not be glad.  
The dead never speak when the living dream—  
They are too weak and sad.

She listened and sate till night grew late,  
Bound by a weary spell.  
Then a face came in at the garden-gate,  
And a wondrous thing befell.

Up rose the joy as well as the love,  
In the song, in the scent, in the show !  
The moon grew glad in the sky above,  
The blossom grew rosy below.

May passed into June in the scent and the tune ;  
They filled the veins of night ;  
But they had no thanks for the granted boon,  
For the lady forgot them quite.

## THE SEA-SHELL.

“**L**ISTEN, darling, and tell to me  
What the murmurer says to thee,  
Murmuring 'twixt a song and a moan,  
Changing neither tune nor tone.”

“Yes, I hear it—far and faint,  
Like thin-drawn prayer of drowsy saint ;  
Like the falling of sleep on a weary brain,  
When the fevered heart is quiet again.”

“By smiling lip and fixed eye,  
You are hearing more than song or sigh :  
The wrinkled thing has curious ways—  
I want to know what words it says.”

“ I hear a wind on a boatless main  
Sigh like the last of a vanishing pain ;  
On the dreaming waters dreams the moon,  
But I hear no words in their murmured tune.”

“ If it does not say that I love thee well,  
'Tis a senseless, ill-curved, worn-out shell.  
If it is not of love, why sigh or sing ?  
'Tis a common, mechanical, useless thing.”

“ It whispers of love—'tis a prophet-shell—  
Of a peace that comes and all shall be well ;  
It speaks not a word of your love to me,  
But it tells me to love you eternally.”

### AUTUMN SONG.

AUTUMN clouds are flying, flying,  
O'er the waste of blue ;  
Summer flowers are dying, dying,  
Late so lovely new.  
Labouring wains are slowly rolling  
Home with winter grain ;  
Holy bells are slowly tolling  
Over buried men.

Goldener light sets noon a sleeping  
Like an afternoon ;  
Colder airs come stealing, creeping  
After sun and moon ;

And the leaves, all tired of blowing  
Cloud-like o'er the sun,  
Change to sunset-colours, knowing  
That their day is done.

Autumn's sun is sinking, sinking  
Into winter's night ;  
And our hearts are thinking, thinking  
Of the cold and blight :  
Our life's sun is slowly going  
Down the hill of might ;  
And no cloud shines rosy-glowing  
On the slope of night ?

But the vanished corn is lying  
In rich golden glooms.  
In the churchyard, all the sighing  
Is above the tombs.  
Spring will come, slow lingering,  
Opening buds of faith :  
Man goes forth to meet his Spring  
Through the door of death.

Welcome then, with love more lowly,  
Evening lines of gray ;

Welcome footfalls moving slowly  
Towards the coming day.  
And if thought back-looking lingers  
On youth's withering,  
'Tis to mark that Autumn's fingers  
Paint in hues of Spring.

AN AUTUMN WIND.

THE autumn winds are sighing  
Over land and sea ;  
The autumn woods are dying  
Over hill and lea ;  
And my heart is sighing, dying,  
Maiden, for thee.

The autumn clouds are flying  
Homeless over me ;  
The homeless birds are crying  
In the naked tree ;  
And my heart is flying, crying,  
Maiden, to thee.

My cries may turn to gladness,  
And my flying flee ;  
My sighs may lose the sadness,  
Yet sigh on in me !  
All my sadness, all my gladness,  
Maiden, lost in thee.



DAYS OF OLD.

DAYS of old,  
Ye are not dead, though gone from me ;  
Ye are not cold,  
But like the summer-birds gone o'er the sea.  
The sun brings back the swallows fast,  
O'er the sea :  
When thou comest at the last,  
The days of old come back to me.

THE WATERS ARE RISING AND FLOWING.

THE waters are rising and flowing  
Over the weedy stone—  
Over it, over it going :  
It is never gone.

So joy after joy may go sweeping  
Over the ancient pain :  
Drowned in waves and waves of weeping—  
It will rise again.

## A SONG OF THE SEA.

THERE is a plough that hath no share,  
But a coulter that parteth keen and fair.

The furrows rise

To a terrible size,

Or ever the plough hath touched them there.

'Gainst horses and plough in wrath they shake :

The horses are fierce ; but the plough will break.

And the seed that is dropt in those furrows of fear,

Will lift to the sun neither blade nor ear.

Down it drops plumb,

Where no spring-times come ;

Nor needeth it any harrowing gear :

Wheat nor poppy nor any leaf

Will cover this naked ground of grief.

But a harvest-day will come at last,  
When the watery winter all is past ;  
    The furrows so gray  
    Shall be shorn away  
By the angels' sickles keen and fast ;  
And the buried harvest of the sea  
Stored in the barns of eternity.



FOR CHILDREN.



## WHAT MAKES SUMMER?

A CHILD'S QUESTION.

WINTER froze the brook and well ;  
Fast and fast the snow-flakes fell ;  
Children gather'd round the hearth,  
Made a summer of their mirth ;  
When a child—so lately come  
That a month was one great sum  
Of days and nights, of rides and rambles,  
Of sleeping dreams and waking gambols—  
Said aloud, " I wish I knew  
What makes summer—that I do."  
And the answer to his question,  
Pretty good, was not the best one.



'Tis the sun that rises early,  
Shining, shining all day rarely ;  
Drawing up the larks to meet him,  
Earth's bird-angels, wild to greet him ;  
Drawing up the clouds, to pour  
Down again a shining shower ;  
Drawing out the flowers to stare  
At their father in the air ;  
He all light, they how much duller !  
Yet little suns of every colour ;  
Drawing out the grass and clover—  
Blossoms breaking out all over ;  
Drawing out the flying things—  
Out of eggs, fast-flapping wings ;  
Out of lumps like frozen snails,  
Butterflies with splendid sails ;  
Beetles with their burnish'd backs,  
Living gold in earthy cracks ;  
Drawing out upon the trees  
Clothes of green of all degrees ;  
Drawing sparkles out of water,  
Dancing, glancing, as he taught her ;  
Drawing children out of doors,  
On two legs, or on all fours ;

Drawing out of gloom and sadness,  
Hope and blessing, peace and gladness ;  
Sending winds to every nook,  
To see that nothing is forsook ;  
Making man's heart sing and shine  
In his brilliancy divine.

Then so slowly, down the west,  
Lingering, he goes to rest !  
Like a child so blissful yet,  
So unwilling to forget,  
That though sleepy, heels and head,  
He thinks he cannot go to bed ;  
And when he is down the hill  
He is looking backward still,  
And his glory with the night  
Makes the lovely gray twilight ;  
Drawing out the downy owl,  
With his musical bird-howl ;  
Drawing out the leathery bats—  
Mice they are, turn'd airy cats—  
Noiseless, sly, and slippery things,  
Swimming through the air on wings ;  
Drawing out the feathery moth,

Lazy, sleepy, very loath,  
Hardly knowing where she flits,  
Sleeping instant when she sits ;  
Drawing light from glowworms' tails,  
Glimmering green in grassy dales.

Then the moon comes up the hill,  
Wide awake, but dreaming still ;  
Soft and slow, as if in fear,  
Lest her path should not be clear.  
Like a lady she doth rise,  
Making moons in all our eyes ;  
Till at length, weary with pleasure,  
Every eye shuts up its treasure ;  
All the children lie like dead,  
Sleeping in God's summer-bed ;  
And the now triumphant moon,  
High as is the sun at noon,  
Draws out dreams, all sweet and wild,  
From sleeping father, mother, child ;  
And the stars, and bats, and things,  
With sparkles, feathers, hooks, and wings,  
Peeping from their heavenly holes,  
Or creeping out of cracks and boles,

---

Sparkle, peep, and watch, and play—  
Have it all their funny way ;  
Night into a dream they make,  
Full of creatures wide awake :  
What a strange delight is out,  
When nothing human is about !

'Tis the sun that does it all ;  
'Tis his warmth when night-shades fall ;  
'Tis his radiance backward strewn  
From the mirror of the moon ;  
Everywhere it is his power  
Maketh summer every hour.

But when the nightingale is there,  
He puts it all, so queer and fair,  
In a never-ending song,  
Which he sings the whole night long.

When I heard him last, he sang  
Till the woody echoes rang ;  
This is what he sung and spoke :  
—This is for us older folk ;  
Not for you, you little starers,  
Not for you, for-nothing-carers ;

Go to sleep, you darlings, go ;  
Dream of roses till they blow ;  
You may ride the nightmare's crupper,  
With such poetry for supper.  
—Here's the song the creatures heard  
From the little, mighty bird :

“ Beautiful mother is busy all day—  
So busy she neither can sing nor say ;  
But lovely things, with a music-flow,  
Through her eyes, and her ears, and her  
bosom go ;  
Thought and sight, and sound and scent,  
In a dream of royal, full content.

“ But when night is come, and her children  
asleep,  
Beautiful mother her watch doth keep ;  
Then with glowing stars in her dusky hair,  
Down she sits to her music rare ;  
And her instrument that never fails,  
Is the hearts and the throats of her nightingales.”

### THE MISTLETOE.

KISS me, kiss me, little Neddy.  
Ah ! you see her, staring steady,  
For your eyes there's not a wonder  
Can escape, above or under.  
You have caught the pretty creature  
Sitting on her nest. A neater  
Never bird built on this planet ;  
Never was a sweeter than it ;  
Never brood was such as this is :  
That's the nest of all the kisses.  
That's the Kissing-bird that's sitting  
Christmas through, and never flitting ;  
Kisses, kisses, kisses hatching—  
Sweetest birdies, for the catching.

There ! that's one I caught this minute,  
Musical as any linnet.  
Where it is, your big eyes ask me ?  
That's a question will not task me.  
There it is—upon mouth merry ;  
There it is—upon cheek cherry ;  
There's another on chin-chinnie ;  
Now it is away to Minnie ;  
There's another on nose-nosey ;  
There's another on lip-rosy ;  
And the Kissing-bird is hatching  
Hundreds more for only catching.

Why the mistletoe she chooses,  
And the Christmas-tree refuses ?  
Minnie, you think that's a puzzle ?  
I your little mouth will muzzle  
With another question, able  
Quite to quench the unreasonable.  
Tell me, then, you sly young monkey,  
Or be witched into a donkey,  
Why the wren should choose an apple ;  
Or the rook with beadles grapple,  
Building in a windy steeple,  
Far above the solemn people ;

Or the limping, cheating plover  
Not upon an elm-tree hover,  
But prefer in fields to grubble  
With the partridge—which the stubble  
Will betray, with ruined fancies,  
To a thousand sad mischances.—  
Tell me this, and I will tell you  
Why this birdie, soft and mellow,  
In the mistletoe aye buildeth,  
Though the shade be small it yieldeth.

No, you cannot. I don't doubt it.  
Then I'll tell you all about it.  
You may take it, or may leave it,  
Scorn my reason, or receive it.

'Tis because the mistletoe will  
Never yet consent to grow well  
But upon some tree-stem planted—  
And for kissing two are wanted.  
Therefore 'tis the Kissing-birdie  
Chooses not the oak-tree sturdie,  
But the plant that grows upon it—  
Like the wreath on my new bonnet.

But, my blessed little mannie,  
All the birdies are not cannie



That the Kissing-birdie hatches.  
Some are worthless little wretches—  
Have no life in them to speak of,  
And are dead your very cheek off.  
May such kisses never touch you,  
For they only smear and smutch you !  
—It depends what kind of net you  
Set to catch one. It will fret you  
If you catch a winged mole, or  
Any other flying crawler :  
You won't like it, little Neddy ;  
Therefore, sir, be wise and steady.  
Kisses vain and kisses greedy,  
Kisses careless, kisses needy,  
Are as poor and mean and empty  
As your favourite Humpty Dumpty  
After his tremendous tumble,  
Shedding brains it could not jumble.  
—Be you worthy of such kisses  
As the true heart never misses ;  
And of birds not one or other  
Kiss you worse than your own mother !

## WILD FLOWERS.

BOUNTIFUL Primroses,  
    With outspread heart that needs the rough  
        leaves' care,  
As in his mother's lap a little child  
Courts shelter shy from his own open air !  
Hang-head Bluebell,  
Bending like Moses' sister over Moses,  
Full of a secret that thou dar'st not tell !  
Fluttering wild  
Anemone, so well  
Named of the wind, to which thou art all free,  
Yielding so helpless-wilfully,  
With *Take me or leave me*,  
*Sweet wind, I am thine own Anemone !*  
Thirsty forest Arum, ever dreaming  
Of lakes in sunny deserts gleaming !

Fire-hearted Pimpernel,  
Communing with some hidden well,  
And secrets with the sun-god holding,  
At fixed hour folding and unfolding !  
How feel you, earthly children all,  
When human children on you fall,  
Gather you in eager haste,  
Forget your beauty in their waste,  
Fill and fill their full-filled hands ?  
Goeth a tearing through your breast,  
A fainting, melting of your bands ?  
Do you know  
When the spoilers near you come  
By a shuddering in your gloom ?  
For blind and deaf we think you are,  
Hearing, seeing, near nor far.  
Is it so ?  
Is it only ye are dumb ?  
You alive at least I think,  
Trembling almost on the brink  
Of our awful consciousness :  
If it be so,  
Comfort you can take from this,  
For the breaking of your rest,

For the tearing in your breast :  
That the children's wonder-springs  
Bubble high at sight of you,  
Lovely, lowly, common things !  
They believe although they see,  
When ye float into their view,  
Stems and spring-buds glimmering through ;  
That ye, brave things, creeping out,  
Smile into our manhood's doubt ;  
Teach us hope though age is nigh.  
Thus ye die not, though ye die ;  
Thus ye yield your being up,  
Like a nectar-holding cup :  
Deaf, ye give to them that hear,  
With a greatness lovely-dear ;  
Blind, ye give to them that see,  
Poor, but bounteous royally.  
Lowly servants to the higher,  
Burning upwards in the fire  
Of Nature's endless sacrifice,  
Thus in Nature's life ye rise,  
Leave the earth and self behind,  
And pass into the human mind.

### WHAT THE OWL KNOWS.

NOBODY knows the world but me.

When they 're all in bed, I sit up to see.  
I'm a better student than students all,  
For I never read till the darkness fall ;  
And I never read without my glasses,  
And that is how my wisdom passes.

I can see the wind. Now who can do that ?  
I see the dreams that he has in his hat ;  
I see him snorting them out as he goes—  
Out at his stupid old trumpet-nose.  
Ten thousand things that you couldn't think,  
I write them down with pen and ink.

---

You may call it learning—I call it wit.  
Who else can watch the lady-moon sit  
Hatching the boats and the long-legged fowl,  
On her nest, the sea, all night, but the owl?  
When the oysters gape to sing by rote,  
She crams a pearl down each stupid throat.

So you see I know—you may pull of your hat,  
Whether round and lofty, or square and flat.  
You can never do better than trust to me ;  
You may shut your eyes so long as I see.  
While you live I will lead you, and then—I'm  
the owl—  
I will bury you nicely with my spade and shawl.

WHAT THE BIRDS SAID AND WHAT THE  
BIRDS SANG.

“ I WILL sing a song.  
I ’m the owl.”

“ Sing a song, you sing-song  
Ugly fowl !  
What will you sing about,  
Night in and day out ?”

“ Sing about the night :  
I ’m the owl.”

“ You could not see for the light,  
Stupid fowl !”

“ Oh ! the moon ! and the dew !  
And the shadows !—tu-whoo !”

---

“I will sing a song.  
I'm the nightingale.”  
“Sing a song, long, long,  
Little Neverfail !  
What will you sing about,  
Day in or day out?”

“Sing about the light  
Gone away ;  
Down, away, and out of sight—  
Poor lost day !  
Mourning for the day dead,  
O'er his dim bed.”

---

“I will sing a song.  
I'm the lark.”  
“Sing, sing, Throat-strong,  
Little Kill-the-dark !  
What will you sing about,  
Now the night is out?”



"I can only call ;  
I can't think.  
Let me up—that's all.  
Let me drink !  
Thirsting all the long night  
For a drink of light."

BALLADS.



## THE UNSEEN MODEL.

FORTH to his study the sculptor goes \*

In a mood of lofty mirth.

“Now shall the tongues of carping foes

Confess what my art is worth.

In the womb of my brain one night she grows—

One more shall see her birth.”

He stood like a god. With creating hand,

He struck the formless clay :

“Psyche, arise,” he said, “and stand

In beauty confronting the day.

I cannot find thee in any land—

I will make thee. And so I say.”

The sun was low in the eastern skies,  
And the day was in its youth,  
When the sculptor said, "I will arise";  
And he makes his "woman in sooth,"  
Till the shadows gather as daylight dies,  
Like questions around the truth.

But the sculptor said "My lamp burns bright.  
I will work on," said he,  
"In spite of the darkness. The very night  
Shall hurry and hide and flee  
From the glow of my lamp, and the making might  
That shineth out of me."

The sculptor modelled, the sculptor made.  
But neither line nor limb  
Either obeyed or disobeyed—  
Not yielding all to him.  
He knew it not, yet he grew afraid:  
"Night-work in clay is grim.

"'Tis the lamp," he said. "It will not burn right.  
But the morning comes amain."  
He had wrought and modelled the livelong night,

---

At the Psyche of his brain,  
When, lifting his eyes, he saw the light  
Looking in at his window-pane.

The lamp went out. The gray light spread  
Through films of window-dew.  
Melted the shadows; stared the casts dead;  
Glimmered each marble blue.  
The sculptor dropped his arms, and said,  
“Now I shall have a view.”

Backward he stepped. A dumb dismay  
Turned his face to a mask of fear.  
There she stands—no ideal in clay!  
No Psyche from upper sphere!  
But the form of a maiden dead—away—  
Forgotten for one long year.

Her soul to his he had witched and wiled,  
And gently she drew to his side.  
He wearied and went. The maiden smiled,  
And with dying autumn she died.  
Now risen, she stands the sculptor's child,  
No more to be denied.

His Pride on Art's throne would have leapt—  
Love is henceforth his doom.  
Psyche awoke her ; forth she crept ;  
He made *her* in the gloom.  
Henceforth she stands where once she slept,  
In his bosom's secret room.

For his soul shall haunt her form with sighs ;  
And his heart shall pine and rue ;  
And still in his study, where shapes arise,  
Each marble they carve and hew  
Shall have this maiden's mournful eyes,  
And her shape shall glimmer through.

## LEGEND OF THE CORRIEVRECHAN.

PRINCE BREACAN of Denmark was lord on  
the land,

And lord upon the sea :  
Lord of the sea and lord of the sand,  
He might have let maidens be.

He met a maiden with locks of gold,  
A walking by the sea ;  
And she listened as maidens listened of old—  
And lonely walketh she.

He left the tears where he found the smiles ;  
And he sailed over the sea,  
Till he came to the shores of the Scottish Isles :  
Now give me thy daughter, said he.



The Lord of the Isles rose up and said,  
None but a King of the Sea  
The Maid of the Isles shall woo and wed.  
Now hearken well to me.

Hold thine own three nights and days  
In this whirlpool of the sea,  
Or turn thy prow and go thy ways,  
And let the sea-maid be.

Prince Breacan he turned his sea-dog prow,  
And back went over the sea.  
Wise women, he said, now tell me how  
In yon whirlpool to anchor me.

Make a cable of hemp and a cable of wool,  
And a cable of maidens' hair ;  
And hie thee back to the roaring pool,  
And anchor in safety there.

Twist the brown hair for one strand,  
And the raven for another ;  
And twine the third in a golden band,  
To bind the one to the other.

---

He gathered the hemp, and he shore the wool,  
And the maidens brought their hair,  
To hold him fast in the roaring pool  
By three anchors of iron rare.

And he twisted the brown hair for one strand,  
And the raven for another ;  
And he twined the golden in a band,  
To bind the one to the other.

And he took the hemp, and he took the wool,  
And he took the maidens' hair,  
And he hied him back to the roaring pool,  
And he cast three anchors there.

The whirlpool roared ; and the day went by,  
And night came down on the sea.  
But or ever the morning broke the sky,  
The hemp had broken in three.

But the wool held out ; and the whirlpool ran,  
And the storm it hailed and blew.  
But or ever the third morning began,  
The wool had parted in two.

---

And the storm it roared all day the third,  
And the whirlpool reeled about ;  
And the night came down like a wild black bird,  
But the maidens' hair held out.

And round and round with a giddy swing,  
Went the sea-king through the dark ;  
And round went the rope in the swivel-ring,  
And round went the straining bark.

Prince Breacan he sat by the good boat's prow,  
A lantern in his hand :  
Praised be the maidens of Denmark now !  
By them shall Denmark stand.

He watched the rope through the storm so black,  
A lantern in his hold :  
Out, out, alack ! one strand will crack ;  
And it is of shining gold !

And the morning broke and the sun came out :  
Nor lord nor ship was there.  
For the golden strand in the cable stout  
Was not all of maidens' hair.

### THE DEAD HAND.

THE witch-lady walked along the strand ;  
    Heard a roaring of the sea ;  
On the edge of a pool saw a dead man's hand,  
    Good for a witch-ladye.

Light she stepped across the rocks,  
    Came where the dead man lay :  
Now maiden fair, with your merry mocks,  
    Now I shall have my way.

On his finger gleamed a sapphire blue.  
    Oh that's my ring ! she said ;  
And back I take my promise true,  
    For the old love is dead.

She took the dead hand in the live,  
And at the ring drew she ;  
But the dead hand closed with its fingers five,  
And they held the witch-ladye.

Cold, cold with death, came up the tide,  
In no manner of haste ;  
Up to her knees, and up to her side,  
Up to her wicked waist.

And over the blue sea went the bride,  
All in her true love's ship ;  
And up and up came the blue tide  
Over the witch's lip.

For the hand of the dead and the heart of the  
dead  
Are strong hasps they to hold ;  
The new love went with the fair fair maid,  
And left the witch with the old.

SCOTCH SONGS AND BALLADS.



### ANNIE SHE'S DOWIE.

ANNIE she's dowie, and Willie he's wae.  
What can be the matter wi' siccan a twae—  
For Annie she's bonny 's the first o' the day,  
And Willie he's strang and honest and gay?

Oh ! the tane has a daddy is poor and is proud  
And the tither a minnie that cleiks at the goud  
They lo'ed ane anither, and said their say—  
But the daddy and minnie hae partit the twae.



O LASSIE AYONT THE HILL!

O LASSIE ayont the hill,  
Come ower the tap o' the hill,  
Or roun' the neuk o' the hill,  
For I want ye sair the nicht.  
I'm needin' ye sair the nicht,  
For I'm tired and sick o' mysel'.  
A body's sel' 's the sairest weicht:  
O lassie, come ower the hill!

Gin a body culd be a thought o' grace,  
And no a sel' ava!  
I'm sick o' my heid and my han's and my face,  
And my thoughts and mysel' and a'.

I'm sick o' the warl' and a';  
The licht gangs by wi' a hiss;  
For throu my een the sunbeams fa',  
But my weary hert they miss.  
O lassie ayont the hill!  
Come ower the tap o' the hill,  
Or roun' the neuk o' the hill;  
Bidena ayont the hill.

For gin ance I saw yer bonnie heid,  
And the sunlicht o' yer hair,  
The ghaist o' mysel' wad fa' doun deid,  
I wad be mysel' nae mair.  
I wad be mysel' nae mair,  
Filled o' the sole remeid,  
Slain by the arrows o' licht frae yer hair,  
Killed by yer body and heid.  
O lassie ayont the hill! &c.

But gin ye lo'ed me ever sae sma',  
For the sake o' my bonnie dame,  
Whan I cam to life, as she gaed awa',  
I culd bide my body and name.

I nicht bide my sel', the weary same—  
Aye settin' up its heid  
Till I turn frae the cla'es that cover my frame,  
As gin they war roun' the deid.  
O lassie ayont the hill ! &c.

But gin ye lo'ed me as I lo'e you,  
I wad ring my ain deid knell ;  
My sel' wad vanish, shot through and through  
Wi' the shine o' your sunny sel'.  
By the shine o' yer sunny sel',  
By the licht aneath yer broo,  
I wad dee to mysel', and ring my bell,  
And only live in you.

O lassie ayont the hill !  
Come ower the tap o' the hill,  
Or roun' the neuk o' the hill,  
For I want ye sair the nicht.  
I'm needin' ye sair the nicht,  
For I'm tired and sick o' mysel'.  
A body's sel' 's the sairest weicht :  
O lassie, come ower the hill.

A SONG OF ZION.

A NE by ane they gang awa'.  
The gatherer gathers great and sma'.  
Ane by ane maks ane and a'.

Aye whan ane is ta'en frae ane,  
Ane is left ahint to mane.  
Bide a wee—they'll smile again.

Whan God's hairst is in er' lang,  
Golden-heidit, ripe, and strang,  
Syne begins a better sang.

GAEIN' AND COMIN'.

WHAN Andrew frae Strathbogie gaed,  
The lift was lowerin' dreary ;  
The sun he wadna raise his heid ;  
The win' blew laich and eerie.  
In's pooch he had a plack or twa—  
I vow he hadna mony ;  
Yet Andrew like a linty sang,  
For Lizzie was sae bonny !  
O Lizzie, Lizzie, bonnie lassie !  
Bonny, saucy hizzie !  
What richt had ye to luik at me,  
And drive me daft and dizzy ?

Whan Andrew to Strathbogie cam,  
The sun was shinin' rarely ;

---

He rade a horse that pranced and sprang—  
I vow he sat him fairly.  
And he had gowd to spend and spare,  
And a hert as true as ony ;  
But 's luik was doon, and his sigh was sair,  
For Lizzie was sae bonny !  
O Lizzie, Lizzie, bonny hizzie !  
Ye've turned the daylight dreary.  
Ye're straucht and rare, ye're fause and fair—  
Hech ! auld John Armstrong's deary !

### THE WAESOME CARL.

THERE cam a man to our toon-en',  
And a waesome carl was he ;  
Wi' a snubbert nose, and a crookit mou',  
And a cock in his left ee.  
And muckle he spied, and muckle he spak,  
But the burden o' his sang  
Was aye the same and ower again :  
There's nane o' ye a' but's wrang.  
Ye're a' wrang, and a' wrang,  
And a'thegither a' wrang ;  
There's no a man aboot the toon  
But's a'thegither a' wrang.

That's no the gait to bake the breid,  
Nor yet to brew the yill ;  
That's no the gait to haud the pleuch,  
Nor yet to ca the mill ;

That's no the gait to milk the coo,  
Nor yet to spean the calf;  
Nor yet to fill the girnle-kist—  
Ye kenna yer wark by half.  
Ye're a' wrang, &c.

The minister wasna fit to pray,  
And lat alane to preach;  
He nowther had the gift o' grace,  
Nor yet the gift o' speech.  
He mind't him o' Balaam's ass,  
Wi' a differ ye may ken:  
The Lord he opened the ass's mou',  
The minister opened 's ain.  
He's a' wrang, &c.

The puir precentor cudna sing,  
He gruntit like a swine;  
The verra elders cudna pass  
The ladles till his min'.  
And for the rulin'-elder's grace,  
It wasna worth a horn;  
He didna half uncurse the meat,  
Nor pray for mair the morn.  
He's a' wrang, &c.



And aye he gied his nose a thraw,  
And aye he crook't his mou' ;  
And aye he cockit up his ee,  
And said—Tak' tent the noo.  
We leuch ahint oor loof, man,  
And never said him nay ;  
And aye he spak—set 'm up to speik !  
And aye he said his say :  
Ye're a' wrang, &c.

Quo' oor gudeman : The crater's daft ;  
But wow ! he has the claik ;  
Lat's see gin he can turn a han',  
Or only luik and craik.  
It's true we maunna lippen till him—  
He's fairly crack wi' pride ;  
But he maun live—we canna kill him—  
Gin he can work, he s' bide.  
He was a' wrang, &c.

It's true it's but a laddie's turn,  
But we'll begin wi' a sma' thing :  
There's a' thae weyds to gather and burn—  
And he's the man for a' thing.

We gaed our wa's, and loot him be,  
To do jist as he micht;  
We think to hear nae mair o' him,  
Till we come hame at nicht;  
But we're a' wrang, &c.

For, losh ! or it was denner-time,  
The lift was in a low !  
The reek rase up as it had been  
Frae Sodom-flames, I vow.  
We ran like mad ; but corn and byre  
War blazin'—wae's the fell !—  
As gin the deil had brocht the fire,  
To mak anither hell.  
'Twas a' wrang, &c.

And by the blaze the carl stud,  
Wi' 's han's aneath his tails ;  
To see him maisthan' drave us wud,  
We scarce could haud oorsels.  
It's a' your wite ; I tauld ye sae ;  
Ye're a' wrang to the last :  
What gart ye burn thae deevilich weyds,  
Whan the win' blew frae the wast ?

Ye're a' wrang, and a' wrang,  
And a'thegither a' wrang ;  
There's no a man in a' the warl'  
But's a'thegither a' wrang.

## THE EARL O' QUARTERDECK.

THE wind it blew, and the ship it flew ;  
And it was " Hey for hame !  
And ho for hame !" But the skipper cried,  
" Haud her oot o'er the saut sea faem."

Then up and spoke the king himsel' :  
" Haud on for Dumferline !"  
Quo the skipper, " Ye 're king upo' the land—  
I'm king upo' the brine."

And he took the helm intil his hand,  
And he steered the ship sae free ;  
Wi' the wind astarn, he crowded sail,  
And stood right out to sea.

Quo the king, "There's treason in this, I vow ;  
This is something underhand !  
'Bout ship!" Quo the skipper, "Yer grace forgets  
Ye are king but o' the land !"

And still he held to the open sea ;  
And the east wind sank behind ;  
And the wast had a bitter word to say,  
Wi' a white-sea-roarin' wind.

And he turned her head into the north.  
Said the king : "Gar fling him o'er."  
Quo the fearless skipper : "It's a' ye're worth !  
Ye'll ne'er see Scotland more."

The king crept down the cabin-stair,  
To drink the gude French wine.  
And up she came, his daughter fair,  
And luiket ower the brine.

She turned her face to the drivin' hail,  
To the hail but and the weet ;  
Her snood it brak, and as lang's hersel',  
Her hair drave out i' the sleet.

She turned her face frae the drivin' wind—

“What's that ahead?” quo she.

The skipper he threw himsel' frae the wind,

And he drove the helm a-lee.

“Put to yer hand, my lady fair !

Put to yer hand,” quo' he ;

“Gin she dinna face the win' the mair,

It's the waur for you and me.”

For the skipper kenned that strength is strength.

Whether woman's or man's, at last.

To the tiller the lady she laid her hand,

And the ship laid her cheek to the blast.

For that slender body was full o' soul,

And the will is mair than shape ;

As the skipper saw when they cleared the berg,

And he heard her quarter scrape.

Quo the skipper : “Ye are a lady fair,

And a princess grand to see ;

But ye are a woman, and a man wad sail

To hell in your company.

She liftit a pale and a queenly face ;  
Her een flashed, and syne they swam.  
“And what for no to heaven?” she says,  
And she turned awa’ frae him.

But she took na her hand frae the good ship’s helm,  
Until the day did daw ;  
And the skipper he spak, but what he said  
It was said atween them twa.

And then the good ship she lay to,  
With the land far on the lee ;  
And up cam the king upo’ the deck,  
Wi’ wan face and bluidshot ee.

The skipper he louted to the king :  
“Gae wa’, gae wa’,” said the king.  
Said the king like a prince, “I was a’ wrang.  
Put on this ruby ring.”

And the wind blew lowne, and the stars cam out,  
And the ship turned to the shore ;  
And afore the sun was up again,  
They saw Scotland ance more.

That day the ship hung at the pier-heid,  
And the king he stept on the land.  
"Skipper, kneel down," the king he said,  
"Hoo daur ye afore me stand?"

The skipper he louted on his knee;  
The king his blade he drew :  
Said the king, "How daured ye contre me?  
I'm aboard my ain ship noo !

"I canna mak ye a king," said he,  
"For the Lord alone can do that ;  
And, forby, ye took it intil yer ain han',  
And crooned yersel sae pat !

"But wi' what ye will I redeem my ring ;  
For ance I am at your beck.  
But first, as ye loutit Skipper o' Doon,  
Rise up Yearl o' Quarterdeck."

The skipper he rose and looked at the king—  
In his een for all his croon :  
Said the skipper, "Here is your grace's ring,  
And yer daughter is my boon."



The reid blude sprang into the king's face—  
A wrathful man to see :  
“The rascal loon abuses our grace ;  
Gae hang him upo' yon tree.”

The skipper he sprang aboard his ship,  
And he drew his biting blade ;  
And he struck the chain that held her fast ;  
But the iron was ower weel made.

And the king he blew a whistle loud ;  
And tramp, tramp, down the pier,  
Cam twenty riders on twenty steeds,  
Clankin' wi' spur and spear.

“He saved your life !” cried the lady fair ;  
His life ye daurna spill !”  
“Will ye come atween me and my hate ?”  
Quo the lady, “ And that I will !”

And on cam the knights wi' spur and spear,  
For they heard the iron ring.  
“Gin ye care na for yer father's grace,  
Mind ye that I am the king.”

"I kneel to my father for his grace,  
Right lowly on my knee ;  
But I stand and look the king in the face,  
For the skipper is king o' me."

She turned and she sprang upo' the deck,  
And the cable splashed i' the sea.  
The good ship spread her wings sae white,  
And awa' wi' the skipper goes she.

Now was not this a king's daughter ?  
And a brave lady beside ?  
And a woman with whom a man might sail  
Into high heaven wi' pride ?

## THE TWA GORDONS.

### PART I.

THERE was John Gordon and Archibald,  
And a yerl's twin sons were they.  
Whan they were ane and twenty year auld,  
They fell out upo' their birthday.

“Turn ye, John Gordon, nae brither o' me !  
Turn ye, fause and fell ;  
Or down ye s' gang, as black as a lee,  
To the muckle deevil o' hell.”

“And quhat for that, Archie Gordon ? I pray.  
Quhat ill hae I dune to thee ?”  
“Fause-faced loon, ye sall rue the day  
Ye get yer answer frae me.

---

“For mine will be louder than Lady Janet’s,  
And spoken i’ braid daylight;  
And the wa’ to speil is my iron mail,  
No her castle-wa’ at nicht.”

“I speilt the wa’ o’ her castle braw,  
I’ the roarin’ win’ yestreen;  
And I sat in her bower till the gloamin’ sta’  
Licht-fittit ahint the mune.”

“Turn ye, John Gordon, fause brither,  
Turn ye, and haud yer ain;  
For ane sall lie on a cauld weet bed,  
And I downa curse again.”

“O Archie, Janet is my true love.  
Quhat for should I speer at thee?”  
“Gin that be true, the deevil’s a sanct,  
And ye are no tellin’ a lee.”

Their swords they drew, and the sparks they flew  
Like the sparks frae a burnin’ peat,  
And the blude ran doun, till the grund a’ roun’  
Like a verra bog was weet.

“O Archie, I hae gotten a cauld supper—  
O’ steel without a grace.  
Ae grip o’ yer han’, afore ye gang,  
And turn me upo’ my face.”

But he’s turnt himsel’ upo’ his heel,  
And wordless awa’ he’s gane ;  
And the corbie-craw i’ the aik abune  
Is roupin’ for his ain.

PART II.

Lady Margaret, her hert richt gret,  
Luiks ower the castle wa’.  
Lord Archibald rides ower the brig in state,  
Ahint him his merry men a’.

With all his band, to the Holy Land  
He’s boune wi’ merry din ;  
A white Christ’s cross upo’ his back,  
In his breast an ugsome sin.

---

And the white cross burned him like the fire,  
That he couldna sleep nor rest ;  
It burned in and in, to win at the sin  
That lay cowerin' in his breast.

A mile frae the shore o' the Deid Sea,  
The army lay ae nicht.  
Lord Archibald rase, and out he gaed,  
A walkin' in the munelicht.

And on he prest, wi' his heid on his breast,  
All in the licht o' the mune.  
Michty stanes lay scattert like sheep,  
Whaur ance they worshipt Mahoun.

The slimy shore o' the deid saut sea  
Lay i' the mune like day ;  
The bones o' the dead on the edge o' its bed—  
It lickit them as they lay.

He sat him doun on a half-sunk stane,  
And he sighed sae dreary and deep :  
"The deevil may tak' my soul whan I wauk,  
Gin he wad but lat me sleep.

“I wad burn in hell for ever and aye  
Wi’ endless dule and smert,  
To sleep a’ nicht like a bairn ance mair,  
And forget my burnin’ hert.”

Oot frae ahint a marble stane  
Cam a voice like a huddy craw’s;  
“Behaud there, Archibald Gordon,” it said;  
“Behaud—ye hae gude cause.”

“I’ll say what I like,” quoth Archibald,  
“Be ye ghaist or deevil or quhat!”  
“Tak tent, Lord Archibald, quhat ye say—  
Ye may tyne yer soul for that.”

Lord Archibald leuch wi’ a loud ha! ha!  
Gruesome and eerie to hear.  
“A bonny bargain Auld Cloots wad hae!  
It has ilka faut but fear.”

“Dune, Lord Archibald?” croaked the voice.  
“Dune, Belzie!” cried he again.  
The white stanes glimmered, the white mune  
shone,  
And Lord Archie was alane.

And back he gaed to his sleepin' men,  
And doun in his cloak he lay,  
And soun' he-sleepit : a pale-faced man  
Sat by his bed till day.

And whenever he moaned or turned him roun',  
Or his broo began to lower,  
Oh ! bonny and clear, i' the sleepin' man's ear,  
He wad rown sweet words o' power.

And the glint o' a smile wad quiver ower  
His cheek sae thin and broun ;  
And a tear wad gather aneath his ee-lids,  
And sometimes wad rin doun.

Ilka nicht cam the pale-faced man  
And sat by his bed a' nicht ;  
And in mail rust-broun, wi' his vizor doun,  
Rade at his knee in the fecht.

But wat ye fu' weel, it wasna the deil  
That took Lord Archie's pairt,  
But his twin-brither John, he thocht deid and  
gone,  
Wi' love like a lowe in his hert.



## PART III.

Hame cam Lord Archibald, weary wicht,  
Hame to his ain countree ;  
And he cried as his castle cam in sicht,  
Now Christ me sain and see !

He turned him roun' and the man in rust-broun  
Was gane, he kenned nocht quhair.  
And doun he lichtit, and into the ha'—  
Lady Margaret met him there.

Reid, reid war her een, but high was her mien,  
And her words war sharp and sair :  
“Welcome, Archie, to dule and tene,  
And welcome ye s' get nae mair.

“Quhaur is yer twin, Lord Archibald,  
That lay i' my body wi' thee?  
I misdoubt ye sair, he's lvin' cauld  
Whaur the daylight comesna to see.”

Lord Archibald docht na speak a word,  
For his hert was like to break.  
He turned to gang ; and the huddy craw  
Was roupin' upo' the aik.

"Now whaur are ye gauin, Lord Archie," she said,  
"Wi' yer lips sae white and thin?"  
"Mother, gude bye ; I'm gauin ance mair  
To lie wi' my brither-twin."

He cam to the aik. "God guide us !" quo' he,  
"Has he lain there ever sin syne !"  
And he thocht he saw the banes sae bare  
Throu the rusty armour shine.

"O brither ! brither !" quo' the Yerl,  
And the tears begud to fa',  
"To put the life intill yer banes  
I wad gie ye my soul and a'."

"Na, na," quo' a voice frae oot the helm—  
And the joints began to close,  
And the iron clattered and tore the gerse  
As up the armour rose—

“Ye hae na a soul to put in his banes,  
On his feet yer brither to set;  
For the sleep was thine, and thy soul is mine—  
And, Lord Archibald, weel met!”

“Twa words to that, Hornie!” quo’ he,  
“For my burnin’ hert burns on;  
And the sleep, I sweir, was none o’ thine,  
For it gae me back my John.

“But I carena a crack for a soul sae black,  
And ye may hae her yet,  
And burn awa’ yer will at her,  
Gin John alive ye set.”

He liftit the visor frae his face—  
Archie thocht to see Mahound;  
But John smiled oot o’ the rusty iron:  
O Archie, ye are found!

“Yer soul is mine, brither Archie,” quo’ he,  
“And I yield ye it back again;  
Never a deevil cam near ye, waur  
Than a brither o’ yer ain.”

Lord Archie he fell upon his knee  
On the ower green grassy sod :  
“The soul that my brother gies back to me  
Sall be thine for ever, O God.”

### THE LAST WOOING.

“O LAT me in, my bonny lass !  
It's a lang road ower the hill ;  
And the flauchterin' snaw begud to fa',  
As I cam by the mill.”

“This is nae change-hoose, John Munro,  
And ye needna come nae mair :  
Ye crookt yer mou' and lichtlied me,  
Last Wednesday, at the fair.”

“I lichtlied ye?”—“Aboon the glass.”  
“Foul-fa' the ill-faured mouth  
That made the leein' word to pass,  
By rowin' 't i' the truth.

“ The fac’ was this : I docht na bide  
To hear yer bonnie name  
Whaur muckle mou’s war opened wide  
Wi’ lawless mirth and shame.

“ And what I said was : ‘ Hoot ! lat sit  
She’s but a bairn, the lass.’  
It turned the spait o’ words a bit,  
And loot yer fair name pass.”

“ Thank ye for naething, John Munro !  
My name can gang or bide ;  
It’s no a sough o’ drucken words  
Wad turn my heid aside.”

“ O Elsie, lassie, be yersel’ !  
The drift is cauld and strang ;  
O tak’ me in ae hour, and syne  
I’ll gather me and gang.”

“ Ye’re guid at fleechin’, John Munro,  
For ye heedna fause and true.  
Gang in to Katie at the mill—  
She lo’es sic like as you.”

He turned his fit ; he spak' nae mair.  
The lift was like to fa' ;  
And Elsie's hert grew grit and sair  
At sicht o' the drivin' snaw.

She laid her down, but no to sleep,  
For her verra hert was cauld ;  
And the sheets war like a frozen heap  
O' snaw about her faul'd.

She rase fu' ear'. And a' theroot  
Was ae braid windin' sheet ;  
At the door-cheek, or winnock-lug,  
Was never a mark o' feet.

She crap a' day about the hoose,  
Dull-fitit and hert-sair,  
Aye keekin' oot like a frichtit moose—  
But Johnnie cam nae mair.

And whan the thow began to melt  
Awa' the ghaistly snaw,  
Her hert was safter nor the thow,  
Her pride had ta'en a fa'.

---

And she oot ower the hill wad gang,  
Whaur the sun was blinkin' bonnie,  
To see his auld minnie in her cot,  
And hear about her Johnnie.

But as oot ower the hill she gaed,  
Throu snaw and slush and weet,  
She stoppit wi' a chokin' cry—  
'Twas Johnnie at her feet !

His heid was smoored aneath the snaw,  
But his breist was maistly bare ;  
And 'twixt his breist and his richt han',  
He claisp't a lock o' hair.

'Twas gowden hair—she kent it weel.  
Alack ! the sobs and cries !  
The warm win' blew, the laverock flew,  
But Johnnie wadna rise.

The spring cam ower the wastlin hill,  
And the frost fled awa' ;  
And the green grass luikit smilin' up,  
Nane the waur for a' the snaw.

Y



Saft, saft it grew on Johnnie's grave,  
Whaur deep the sunshine lay ;  
But lang er' that, on Elsie's heid  
The gowden hair was gray.

## TIME AND TIDE.

AS I was walkin' on the strand,  
I spied an auld man sit  
On ane auld rock ; and aye the waves  
Cam washin' till its fit ;  
And aye his lips gaed mutterin',  
And his ee was dull and blae.  
As I cam near, he luik'd at me,  
But this was a' his say :  
" Robbie and Jeannie war twa bonnie bairns,  
And they played thegither upo' the shore :  
Up cam the tide 'tween the mune and the sterns,  
And pairtit the twa wi' an eerie roar."  
  
" What can the auld man mean," quo' I,  
" Sittin' upo' the auld rock ?  
The tide creeps up wi' moan and cry,  
And a hiss 'maist like a mock.

The words he mutters maun be the en'  
O' a weary dreary sang—  
A deid thing floatin' in his brain,  
That the tide will no lat gang."  
"Robbie and Jeannie war twa bonnie bairns,  
And they played thegither upo' the shore :  
Up cam the tide 'tween the mune and the sterns,  
And pairtit the twa wi' an eerie roar."

"What pairtit them, auld man?" I said ;  
"Did the tide come up ower strang ?  
'Twas a braw deith for them that gaed,  
Their troubles warna lang.  
Or was ane ta'en, and the ither left—  
Ane to sing, ane to greit ?  
Its sair, richt sair, to be bereft ;  
But the tide is at yer feet."  
"Robbie and Jeannie war twa bonnie bairns,  
And they played thegither upo' the shore :  
Up cam the tide 'tween the mune and the sterns,  
And pairtit the twa wi' an eerie roar."

"May be," quo I, "'twas Time's gray sea,  
Whase droonin' 's waur to bide ?

But Death's a diver, seekin' ye  
Aneath its chokin' tide;  
And ye'll luik in ane anither's ee,  
Triumphin' ower gray Time."  
Never ae word he answered me,  
But ower wi' his dreary chime—  
"Robbie and Jeannie war twa bonnie bairns,  
And they played thegither upo' the shore :  
Up cam the tide 'tween the mune and the sterns,  
And pairtit the twa wi' an eerie roar."

"May be, auld man," said I, "'twas change  
That crap atween the twa?  
Hech ! that's a droonin' awfu' strange,  
And waur than ane and a'."  
He spak nae mair. I luikit and saw  
That the auld lips cudna gang.  
The tide unseen tuik him awa'—  
Left me to end his sang :  
"Robbie and Jeannie war twa bonnie bairns,  
And they played thegither upo' the shore :  
Up cam the tide 'tween the mune and the sterns,  
And tuik them whaur pairtin' shall be no more."

ALL SOULS' EVE.

SWEET up the flure, Janet ;  
Put on anither peat.

It's a lown and starry nicht, Janet,  
And nowther cauld nor weet.

And it's open hoose we keep the nicht  
For ony that may be oot.  
It's the nicht atween the Sancts and Souls,  
Whan the bodiless gang aboot.

Set the chairs back to the wa', Janet ;  
Mak ready for quaiet fowk.  
Hae a'thing as clean as a win'in' sheet :  
They comena ilka ook.

There's a spale upo' the flure, Janet;  
And there's a rowan-berry:  
Sweep them into the fire, Janet,  
Or they'll neither come nor tarry.

Syne set open the door, Janet—  
Wide open for wha kens wha?  
As ye come benn to your bed, Janet,  
Set it open to the wa'.

She set the chairs back to the wa',  
But ane made o' the birk;  
She sweepit the flure—left that ae spale—  
A lang spale o' the aik.

The nicht was lowne, and the stars sat still,  
A glintin' doon the sky;  
And the souls crap oot o' their mooly graves,  
A' dank wi' lyin' by.

They faund the doors wide to the wa',  
And the peats blawn rosy reid:  
They war shoonless feet gaed oot and in,  
Nor clampit as they gaed.

Whan midnight cam, the mither rase—  
She wad gae see and hear.  
Back she cam wi' a corp-like face,  
Sloomin' for verra fear.

There's ane o' them sittin' afore the fire !  
Janet ! gang na to see.  
Ye left a chair afore the fire,  
Whaur I tauld ye nae chair suld be.

Janet she smiled in her mother's face :  
She had brunt the rodden reid ;  
But she left aneath the birken chair  
The spale frae a coffin-lid.

She rase and she gaed butt the hoose,  
Aye steekin' door and door.  
Three hours gaed by or her mither heard  
Her fit upo' the floor.

But whan the gray cock crew, she heard  
The sound o' shoeless feet ;  
Whan the reid cock crew, she heard the door,  
And a sough o' wind and weat.

---

Whan the gowd cock crew, Janet cam back ;  
    Wi' a wan face back cam she ;  
And she laid her doon by her mither's side,  
    And she closed her bonnie ee.

Never a word to her minnie she spak,  
    But sound asleep fell she.  
Nor ever after she spak lood oot—  
    Her voice was like ower the sea.

And no man ever heard her lauch,  
    Nor yet say alas or wae ;  
But a smile aye glimmert on her wan face,  
    Like the munelicht on the sea.

And ilka nicht 'tween the Sancts and the Souls,  
    Wide open she set the door ;  
And she mendit the fire, and she left ae chair,  
    And the spale upo' the floor.

And at midnight she gaed butt the hoose,  
    Aye steekin' door and door.  
Whan the gowd cock crew, she came benn the  
    hoose,  
    Aye wanner than afore—



Wanner her face, and sweeter her smile ;  
Till the seventh All Souls' Eve.  
Her mother she heard the shoeless feet,  
Said, she'll be back belive.

But she camna benn. Her mother rase ;  
For fear she 'maist culdna stan' ;  
She grippit the wa', and benn she gaed—  
For the gowden cock had crawn.

And there sat Janet upo' the chair,  
White as the day did daw ;  
Her smile was a sunglint left on the sea,  
Whan the sun has gane awa'.

TO A. I. N. B.

THEY followed hard, for riches' sake,  
The searching men of old,  
After the secret that would make  
The meaner metals gold.

A nobler alchymy is thine,  
O lady born to bless :  
Gold in thy hand becomes divine—  
Grows truth and tenderness.

## TO GARIBALDI.

(WITH A BOOK—WHEN HE VISITED ENGLAND.)

WHEN, at Philippi, he who would have freed  
Great Rome from tyrants, for the season brief  
That lay 'twixt him and battle, sought relief  
From painful thoughts, he in a book did read,  
That so the death of Portia might not breed  
Too many thoughts, and cloud his mind with grief:  
Brother of Brutus, of high hearts the chief,  
When thou in heaven receiv'st the heavenly meed,  
And I shall find my hoping not in vain,  
Tell me my book has wiled away one pang  
That out of some lone sacred memory sprang,  
Or wrought an hour's forgetfulness of pain,  
And I shall rise, my heart brimful of gain,  
And thank my God amid the golden clang.

THE END.

January, 1868.

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